ALASKAN SUPERINTENDENT TURNOVER: IS THERE A CORRELATION BETWEEN ANTICIPATED TURNOVER AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE OF SCHOOL BOARDS IN THE STATE OF ALASKA

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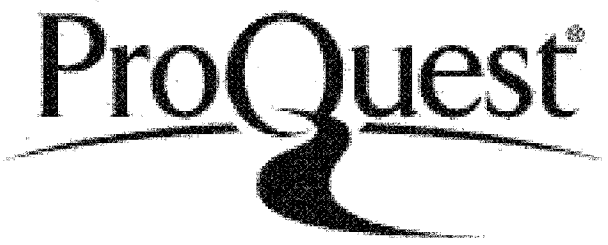

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine if a particular type of school board culture is predictive of Alaskan public school superintendents' intention to leave their positions. Cameron and Quinn's four types of organizational culture—hierarchy, market, clan, and adhocracy—serve as the model for the study, which surveyed Alaska's public school superintendents during the 2010-2011 school year. The 47 participants completed the Anticipated Turnover Scale and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. A correlational analysis was utilized to assess what relationship might exist between anticipated turnover and superintendents' perceptions of their school board culture. No statistically significant correlations were found for any of the specific organizational types and superintendents' intention to quit their job. The findings do not discount the potential for school board culture to impact superintendents' intention to leave their positions; rather they suggest directions future research might take in reframing and exploring this question.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This dissertation studied the anticipated Alaskan superintendent turnover rate for the 2010-2011 school year to determine whether this turnover rate was correlated to variables related to the organizational culture of school boards in the State of Alaska. The strategies of inquiry that were utilized for this research were quantitative strategies, specifically survey research. The results of this inquiry are from an analysis of quantitative data gathered from the survey instrument distributed to all active superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year. This chapter provides a background to the study, a statement of the problem, the significance of the study to the educational profession and scholarship in the field of education, the research design, the research questions, the theoretical framework and literature review, definition of terms, assumptions, scope, limitations, delimitations, and finally a chapter summary.

Background of the Study

The primary role of the superintendent as the leader of the school district and the key person responsible for determining the direction of educational instruction has evolved over time. In 19th century America, the school board provided the primary management of the schools, working directly with teachers and principals to set the educational agenda for the district. Early superintendents were little more than supervisors who carried out the school board's wishes (Campbell, 2001; Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). Hiring of administration and staff, determining funding for programming, making decisions about curriculum, building maintenance, class schedules,

educational calendars, and all manner of resource allocations were the duties of the school board.

Glass et al. (2000) stated that with the turn of the 20th century and the rise of the business class, the idea of managerial efficiency being concentrated in an executive who is specially trained to execute professional tasks took hold across industries and the theory of public school administration was impacted as well. During the first three decades of the century, superintendents began to gain traction and consolidate authority, shaping school boards to observe a more corporate-board style of governance, with the board serving in an advisory capacity, and signing off on the work of the superintendent who had assumed more direct control of daily operations in the school district (Hess, 2010). In the middle of the century, superintendents began to define themselves as instructional leaders, adapting the executive position to include a more education-centric focus (Campbell, 2001; Maeroff, 2010). Glass et al. reported that this view of the superintendency remained in place until the 1990s when, they observed, school boards began to assert themselves and intervene more directly in the determinations of school operations, thereby exerting control in areas that had come to be considered the superintendent's domain. This generated some conflict, and this sense of a shifting power dynamic between school boards and superintendents continues to inform discussion of and inquiry into the relationship of superintendents and school boards today (Sell, 2005).

Petersen and Williams (2005a) described school districts as "complex, unpredictable social organizations" and noted that a confluence of stressors can impact

the dynamics of the organization at any time. Federal regulations, state and local policies, and initiatives such as those arising from the Civil Rights Movement, the Title IX Amendment, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments, often require immediate adjustments to a school district's focus and operation. Invariably, these adjustments will have an effect on the work of the district administration. Sometimes these challenges can be weathered smoothly and with little interruption to the relationships of the stakeholders; however, in many cases tension and some turmoil will accompany these changes as the parties resist or struggle to accommodate the changes and adapt their roles to meet the challenges with which they are confronted.

Alaska has 53 public school districts and one state run school. Each of these districts has one superintendent and one school district governing board. According to Chen (2011), Alaska had 131,661 students enrolled during the 2009-2011 school year, of which 30,300 were classified as American Indian or Alaska Native. Alaska's indigenous population is a significant factor in the state's governance in general and even more so in the governance of Alaskan school districts. Compared to the United States as a whole, Alaska has the highest percentage of native persons among its population, and approximately 25% of the student population in Alaska is comprised of Alaska Natives. The State of Alaska's geographical vastness, the extremely remote and rural school districts, the need to serve a diverse student population with very unique cultural needs, and the environmental setting in which many school districts exist create a particularly complex educational environment (Jones & Ongtooguk, 2002). These factors combine to

create a setting where continuity of quality school district leadership is essential for sustained success of the student population being served.

To date there is very little literature available on the superintendency in the State of Alaska. The fact that the non-contiguous State of Alaska is still, to a certain extent, a frontier state with a significant indigenous population that has struggled at times with federal and state government efforts to assimilate it, cannot be dismissed when considering the nature of the Alaskan educational system. Alaskan superintendents experience circumstances and challenges that may be very different than those encountered by their peers in other parts of the United States. The Alaskan superintendent turnover rate over a 10-year period from 2000 to 2010 was approximately 26%. The national average for superintendent turnover is approximately 13.5% according to (Czaja & Harman, 1997). The high rate of Alaskan superintendent turnover over the last decade brings forth the question of whether Alaskan school districts are prone to the tensions between superintendents and school boards that are key predictors of a superintendent's intention to leave the position (Ahlman, 1986; Wolverton, 2004). School boards may have a profound effect on the anticipated turnover of superintendents; however, there have been no studies conducted in the State of Alaska to determine if the organizational culture of the school board is correlated to the anticipated turnover of the superintendent. This dissertation studies these variables utilizing valid and reliable statistical instruments and quantitative data analysis in order to make valuable contributions to the educational system in the State of Alaska and the educational profession in general.

Statement of the Problem

The general problem is that there is a high turnover rate of superintendents in the State of Alaska. The high turnover rate can have detrimental consequences to the educational system. The specific problem is that no studies have been published to report on the likelihood that superintendents in the State of Alaska will leave their job. In addition, no studies have been published that investigate whether or not Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job is correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board. The purpose of this study was to quantify Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job and to determine if their intention to quit was correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board.

The study population was all active school district superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year, and the researcher intended that the sample would be comprised of the entire population. The final sample was comprised of nearly all current school district superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year, as described in Chapter 3.

Significance of the Study

School district superintendents are extremely important to the success of the education system. Superintendents may introduce changes to school districts that take years to materialize. Without the continued leadership and vision of the superintendent for the duration of the change, the initiative may fail. Therefore, a high turnover rate among superintendents could jeopardize the quality of the education system.

There is a large body of research examining employee retention. A number of factors have been found to be correlated with intention to quit, including job satisfaction, organizational culture, and leadership style of organizational leaders. In addition to these factors, Alaskan superintendents face many extraordinary social, cultural, geographical, climatic, and organizational challenges that could influence their intention to quit their job.

Furthermore, in order for a superintendent to be successful in their job, they must work effectively with the school district's governing board. The governing board has the ultimate authority to support or oppose any proposal made by the superintendent. School district governing boards operate within the context of a certain organizational culture. The type of culture may vary from one district to another. Superintendents may not fit well within a given organizational culture, and this may prove to be an impediment to effective interaction between the superintendent and the governing board. If a superintendent is unable to gain the support of the school board for his or her initiatives, this may lower job satisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood that he or she will quit the job.

While a high turnover rate among superintendents in the State of Alaska is apparent to many who work in the state education system, there is surprisingly little documentation to support the high turnover rate. Furthermore, no studies to date have attempted to establish whether or not there is any correlation between a superintendent's intention to quit and the organizational culture of the school district governing board. Without this information, stakeholders such as superintendents, governing board

members, educational researchers, and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development may not have all the information they need to maximize the effectiveness of the Alaskan education system. This same concept may also be applied to other educational systems throughout the United States.

Research Design

A quantitative correlational study design was determined to be appropriate to address this research. The strategies of inquiry that were utilized in this research were quantitative strategies, specifically survey research. The survey research provided numeric descriptions indicating to what extent, if any, the organizational culture of school boards affects the turnover rates of superintendents in the State of Alaska. The general population studied was all Alaskan superintendents employed during the 2010-2111 academic year. Survey type questionnaires were the primary method of collecting data for the study. The research questions called for the identification of factors that could potentially influence outcomes, and this type of exploration lends itself to a quantitative approach.

The instruments used in this study were the Anticipated Turnover Scale, to determine a superintendent's intention to quit the job, and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, to diagnose the organizational culture of school district governing boards, as perceived by Alaskan superintendents. The instruments were combined to formulate one comprehensive, complete, reliable, and valid instrument that was administered as a questionnaire utilizing the electronic data collection tool, Survey Monkey.

Research Questions

The overarching research question is as follows: What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the perceived organizational culture of the school district governing board, among school superintendents in the State of Alaska? The following specific research questions were addressed:

1. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a clan culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
2. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have an adhocracy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
3. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a hierarchy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
4. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a market culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
5. Do clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting the anticipated turnover of school superintendents in the State of Alaska?

Hypotheses

Related to the research questions are several hypotheses for the present study.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).

Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 is as follows:

H_0: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) do not add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).

H_a: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).

Theoretical Framework and Literature Overview

The occupational duties of a school superintendent in America has changed over the last century—from supervisor to efficiency expert to instructional leader (Campbell, 2001; Glass et al., 2000; Hess, 2010; Kowalski, 2005a; Maeroff, 2010). In addition, expectations of what role schools play in developing the nation's youth into informed and effective adults has changed. The manner in which school effectiveness is valued and assessed has also undergone significant transformation (Farkas, Johnson, & Duffett, 2003; Fuseli, 2006; Harris, Irons, & Crawford, 2006). In the last decade, for instance, NCLB has profoundly altered the terrain of American educational delivery (Firestone, 2009). These fundamental changes are both independent of each other and directly impact each other (Ginsberg & Multon, 2011; Pascopella, 2008). It is therefore somewhat surprising to note the relative scarce supply of empirical research that has been conducted, especially in recent years, on the nature of the school superintendency and the factors that predict effectiveness and satisfaction of school superintendents as they attempt to adapt to and satisfy new demands, mandates, and evolving views of what school leadership entails (Pascopella, 2008; Winter, Rinehart, Keedy, & Bjork, 2007).

These are critical issues to consider as the evidence indicates that turnover rates for superintendents are steadily increasing and, coupled with retirements, the attrition from the field of qualified candidates represents a significant challenge to the health of the educational system (Czaja & Harman, 1997; Lamkin, 2006; Wolverton, 2004). Studies have shown that superintendent turnover is linked to a variety of negative educational outcomes, including instability in staff and administrative positions, resulting in greater turnover at these levels (Natkin et al., 2002a, 2002b) and interruptions in educational programming and instructional effectiveness (Alsbury, 2002, 2008; Natkin et al., 2002). Kowalski, Petersen, and Fusarelli (2005) and Jorgenson (2006) reported findings that the particular challenges many educators associate with the superintendency have proven to be obstacles in attracting talented and effective practitioners to the occupation. This has led to the growing presence of "non-professionals" in the ranks of school superintendents as school systems have either embraced the idea of putting a non-educational leader at the helm of the school system or have been forced, through a lack of qualified candidates, to take on these non-educators to serve in this key role (Pierce, 2005). Fusarelli (2006) provided a compelling argument that non-educators who are hired as school superintendents may lack the knowledge and ability to serve as educational leaders and can have a negative effect on school practice and curriculum delivery.

Beliefs about leadership and perceptions of leader effectiveness are central to leadership theory (Andero, 2000; Browne-Ferrigno & Glass, 2005; Petersen & Williams 2005a). Given the subjective nature of beliefs and perceptions, it is useful to identify

stakeholders in a given leadership situation and to consider particular stakeholder concerns to determine how these may inform and shape interactions between the stakeholders (Bjork & Gurley, 2005; Petersen & Short, 2001). School superintendents must take into account a range of stakeholders with sometimes competing concerns. These include parents, students, teachers, school staff, administrators, the greater community, and civic and political leaders (Petersen & Williams, 2005b). However, the stakeholders the superintendent is often most immediately required to answer to are the members of the school board. These individuals constitute the governing agency of the district school system, and while their relationship with the superintendent is often described in ideal terms as collegial and collaborative, the school board has the final authority over the school superintendent's work by possessing the powers of budget approval and of hiring and firing the district superintendent (Eadie, 2007; Glass et al., 2000). The superintendent is a partner of the school board, is responsible for executing the day-to-day management of the school system and providing educational delivery leadership and expertise, and is directly answerable to the school board as its employee (Castallo, 2003; Hall, 2008; Hofman, Hofman & Guldemond, 2002).

The complexities of this relationship can create tensions, particularly for an ambitious, independent, and transformative leader who may become frustrated under direction from a board the superintendent perceives as too cautious to embrace necessary change or, conversely, too intrusive in day-to-day operations (It's not the board's role..., 2000; Mizell, 2010). Yet other school superintendents may feel generally unsupported by their boards or, in situations of difficulty, abandoned by board members when school

policies are challenged by other stakeholders (Fale et al., 2009). Although the amount of research on superintendent and school board relations is very limited, there is evidence that a difficult dynamic between the superintendent and the school board can have a negative impact on educational delivery (Alsbury, 2002; Fusarelli, 2006; Hofman et al., 2002). Additionally, tension with school board members has been identified as a leading factor in superintendent attrition, second only to leaving a superintendent's position to take a superintendent position in a more prestigious or higher-paying school district, according to a 2000 study conducted by the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), according to Glass et al. (2000).

A close review of the handful of studies on superintendent and school board relations suggests that positive interactions between superintendents and board members are predictive of high job satisfaction among superintendents (Kuncham, 2008; Fale et al., 2009). High job satisfaction is a factor that frequently correlates with intention to remain at a job for the foreseeable future, and this basic relationship is seen across professions (Lowery, Haris, Hopson, & Marshall, 2001; Shields, 2000). In a study of Minnesota school superintendents, Nelson (2010) found that the vast majority of superintendents were satisfied with their board relations. One of the more striking aspects of the researcher's findings was that satisfied superintendents identified boards that observed and supported the boundary between their own oversight and the responsibilities and administrative work of the superintendent, leaving the day-to-day operations to the superintendent. Conversely, Eadie (2007) provided a narrative account of one case in which the school board's relationship with its recently hired superintendent

broke down, which eventually lead to the superintendent leaving the job. This superintendent had been hired by the same school board after an exhaustive search and due, in large part, to his excellent record of working in other school systems. Eadie's description of the breakdown between the superintendent and school board suggests that at the time of the superintendent's hiring, the school board was determining that it should become more proactive in its efforts, which basically translated into becoming more involved in the day-to-day operations of the district. The new superintendent pushed back against these efforts, a power struggle emerged, and the ongoing relations between the board and the superintendent were characterized by conflict. Garza (2008) provided a first-hand account of his difficulties working as a new superintendent in a rural school district. He described a school board that was resistant to change and so engaged in petty disagreements over power and turf-protection that it failed to serve the students' educational needs. Czaja and Harman (1997) reported on a sample of Texas superintendents and found that of 23 who had left their positions in the last year, only 8 had done so to enhance their career or life prospects (e.g., better pay or a more desirable district); the remaining 15 reported that one of the key factors in their leaving their superintendent's position was due to difficult relations with their school board, with many of them citing personality and board culture as sources of tension and conflict.

These examples of positive and negative superintendent and school board relations suggest the underlying significance of school board culture, including how school board members perceive their role and how the resulting organizational culture is manifested in their interactions with the superintendent. As Tharp (2009) observed,

organizational culture is a complex construct covering values, assumptions, beliefs, behaviors, and artifacts. As such, it essentially captures the essence of a group such that the group itself may not clearly identify the ways in which its culture is informed or the manner in which it influences their thinking, actions, and responses. Cameron and Quinn (2006) discussed the importance of identifying organizational culture in order to streamline effectiveness and determine where challenges may lie in a given culture's impact on various stakeholders. Basing their work on Quinn and Rohrbaugh's competing values framework (as cited by Tharp, 2009, p. 2), Cameron and Quinn came up with four primary types of organizational culture: hierarchy (controlling), market (competitive), clan (collaborative), and adhocracy (creative), as depicted in the definitions section that follows. Each type constitutes a specific set of beliefs, assumptions, and values that guide behaviors. Tharp stated that none of these cultures are inherently better than the others but that "some cultures might be more appropriate in certain contexts" (p. 3). Under conditions in which a given organizational culture is consistently required to achieve consistent outcomes, properly diagnosing the culture type can speed effectiveness and support the health of the organization (Tharp, 2009). In the case of school board culture, the identification of organizational type is unlikely to be consistent across school boards and may even change within a given board depending on turnover of board members and evolving community requirements (Alsbury, 2008; Farkas et al., 2003; Glass et al., 2000). However, culture identification may be useful in assessing the dynamics of superintendent and board relations and highlighting whether a particular organizational culture is more conducive to supporting the complexities of superintendent

and school board relations (Elmore, 2000; Fusarelli, 2006; Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001; Petersen & Williams, 2005a, 2005b; Usdan, 2010). The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument has been shown to provide valid and reliable results concerning the identification of organizational culture based on Cameron and Quinn's model of hierarchy, market, clan, and adhocracy types (Scott, Mannion, Davies, & Marshall, 2003). The instrument is utilized in this study to determine whether type of school board culture appears to be predictive of superintendent turnover, drawing on school superintendents in the state of Alaska, a population that has shown very high rates of turnover (Ahlman, 1986; Duffy, 1993; Wolverton, 2004).

Definition of Terms

The terms utilized in this dissertation are important to understanding the study, therefore the following definitions of terms are provided:

Anticipated Turnover Scale (ATS). The purpose of the Anticipated Turnover Scale is to index the employee's perception or opinion of the possibility of voluntarily terminating his or her present job. The self-report ATS instrument contains 12 items in Likert-format with seven response options ranging between agree strongly to disagree strongly. Questions were related to one's anticipated length of time to leaving and certainty of leaving the job (Hinshaw & Atwood, 1979).

Competing values framework. This framework is utilized to diagnose and facilitate change in organizational culture. Empirically derived, it has been found to have both face and empirical validity. It was developed initially from research conducted on the major indicators of effective organizations. See Figure 1.

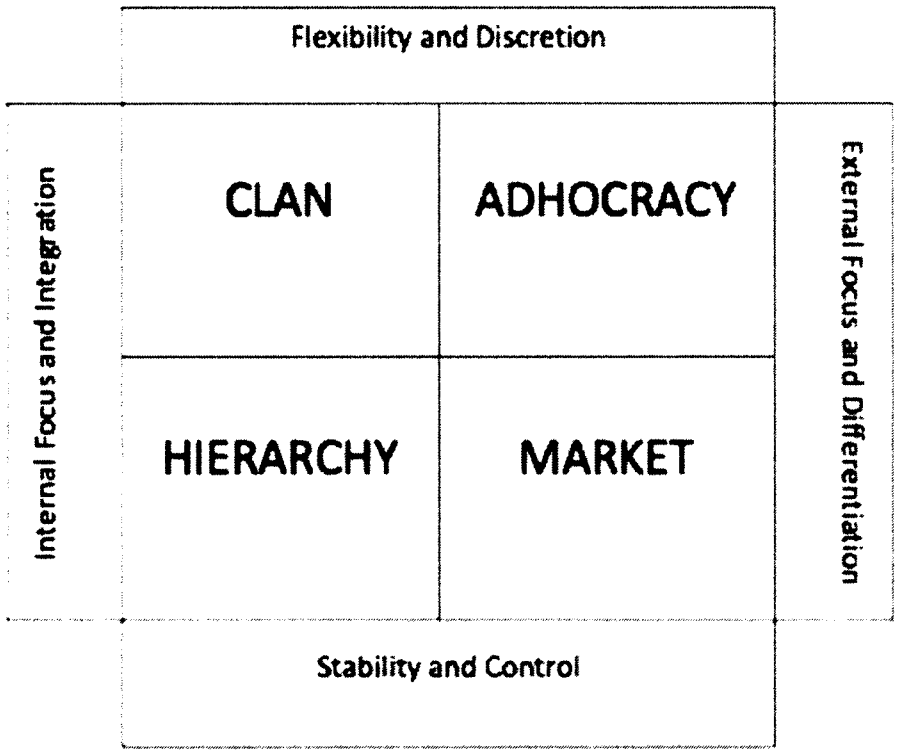

Figure 1. Quadrants of the competing values framework (Lincoln, 2010, p. 4).

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. This instrument was created to diagnose an organization's culture. It assesses six key dimensions of organizational culture. Completion of the instrument provides a picture of the fundamental assumptions on which an organization operates and the values that characterize it. This instrument has been used in more than a thousand organizations and has been found to predict organizational performance. Its intent is to help identify the organization's current culture (Cameron & Quinn, 2006). There are four major culture types as defined by the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. These are defined as follows:

- Adhocracy culture: This culture is characterized by a dynamic, entrepreneurial, and creative workplace. People stick their necks out and take risks. Effective

leadership is visionary, innovative, and risk-orientated. The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to experimentation and innovation. The emphasis is on being at the leading edge of new knowledge, products, and services. Readiness for change and meeting new challenges are important. The organization's long term emphasis is on rapid growth and acquiring new resources. Success means producing unique and original products and services. Examples of this type of organizational culture are aerospace, software development, and film making industries (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

- Clan culture: This culture is described as a friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves. It is like an extended family. Leaders are thought of as mentors and perhaps even as parent figures. The organization is held together by loyalty and tradition. Commitment is high. The organization emphasizes the long term benefit of individual development, with high cohesion and morale being important. Success is defined in terms of internal climate and concern for people. The organization places a premium on teamwork, participation, and consensus. Examples of this type of organizational culture are Post World War II Japanese organizations and People Express Airlines (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).
- Hierarchy culture: This culture is characterized as a formalized and structured place to work. Procedures govern what people do. Effective leaders are good coordinators and organizers. Maintaining a smooth running organization is important. The long-term concerns of the organization are stability, predictability, and efficiency. Formal rules and policies hold the organization

together. Examples of this type of organizational culture are typical U.S. fast food chains such as McDonalds, major conglomerates like Ford Motor Company, and government agencies such as the Justice Department (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

- Market culture: This is a results-orientated workplace. Leaders are hard-driving producers and competitors. They are tough and demanding. The glue that holds the organization together is an emphasis on winning. The long term concern is on competitive actions and achieving stretch goals and targets. Success is defined in terms of market share and penetration. Examples of this type of organizational culture are General Electric under the leadership of Jack Welch as well as Phillips Electronics after a loss of market share in 1991 (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

Assumptions

The following assumptions were applied to this dissertation:

1. The superintendents who were involved in this study understood the language and questions posed on the survey instrument and responded honestly to the survey questions.
2. Superintendents who responded the survey instrument were active superintendents in Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year.
3. Superintendents who participated in this study were assumed to be a representative sample of the superintendents throughout the State of Alaska.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study was confined to the State of Alaska and the superintendents who were actively serving as superintendents in Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year. This study utilized survey research through the administration of a questionnaire to gather data, thus delimiting the data collected and excluding other data collection techniques.

This study focused on the superintendent's perception of the organizational culture of the school board and did not include the school board's perception of the organizational culture of the board. This study encompassed superintendents solely in the State of Alaska and thus did not include other superintendents from other states.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has introduced the study that focuses on the anticipated turnover rate of Alaskan Superintendents and their perception of the organizational culture of the school boards with which they work. The study sought to determine if the anticipated turnover rate of the participating superintendents was correlated to the superintendents' perceptions regarding the organizational culture of their school board. The overarching problem guiding the research was that no studies have been published that explore whether or not Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job is correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board. This chapter presented five research questions, five null hypotheses, and five alternative hypotheses; these were researched and investigated over the course of the study to determine if anticipated turnover rates among superintendents in Alaska were correlated to the organizational cultures of the school boards with which they worked.

The study background was reviewed and the problem statement identified. In addition, the chapter indicated the real significance and relevance of the study to the State of Alaska and the scholarly value that the study possesses in terms of its implications for superintendents nationally. The research design was described and introduced. The definition of terms consisted of study variables that needed to be defined in order for the reader to be able to have an adequate comprehension of terms utilized throughout the study. The subsequent chapters of this dissertation discuss the relevant literature, the methodologies utilized in conducting the research, the data analysis methods employed, and the findings of the study.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction

The review of literature for this study considers the nature of the relationship between superintendents and the school boards of their districts, and the impact that school board culture may have on superintendents' intention to leave the position. The research focuses on the case of Alaskan public school superintendents for the particular challenges associated with educational delivery in the state and the fact that Alaska reports a relatively high rate of superintendent turnover (Duffy, 1993; Wolverton, 2004). The literature review begins with some background on the problems associated with superintendent turnover (Alsbury, 2008; Byrd, Drews, & Johnson, 2006; Czaja & Harman, 1997; Czubaj, 2002; Eadie, 2007; Fale et al., 2009; Fusarelli, 2006; Garza, 2008; It's not the board's role..., 2000; Jorgenson, 2006; Kowalski et al., 2005; Lamkin, 2006; Natkin et al., 2002a; Nelson, 2010; Petersen & Williams, 2005a; Pierce, 2005; Sharp, Malone, Walter, & Supley, 2004; Shields, 2000; Winter et al., 2007; Wolverton, 2004). Additional background literature on Alaska's educational system is discussed (Ahlman, 1986; Alaska Department of Education, 2009; Alaska Public School Review, 2011; Barnhardt, 2001; Chen, 2011; Duffy, 1993; Jones & Ongtooguk, 2002) as well as the limited research and writing on Alaskan superintendents (Ahlman, 1986; AlaskaPride, 2011; Duffy, 1993; Wolverton, 2004).

The superintendent's roles are explored in order to highlight aspects of the superintendent's job that may help or hinder efforts to realize successful leadership of the district (Andero, 2000; Byrd et al., 2006; Farkas et al., 2003; Firestone, 2009; Fuller et

al., 2005; Fusarelli, 2006; Glass et al., 2000; Ginsberg & Multon, 2011; Harris et al., 2006; Pascopella, 2008; Petersen & Williams, 2005a, 2005b). The role of *education supervisor* (Byrd et al., 2006; Chan, Pool, & Strickland, 2001; Firestone, 2009; Glass et al., 2000; Petersen, 2002), *manager* (Browne-Ferrigno & Glass, 2005; Byrd et al., 2006; Firestone, 2009), *inspirational leader* (Firestone, 2009; Glass et al., 2000), and *politician* (Bjork & Gurley, 2005; Campbell, 2001; Farkas et al., 2003; Glass et al., 2000; Whritner, 2009) are described and explored as they apply to the superintendent's work with the district school board and other school stakeholders.

The superintendent's experience of work in a school district is significant in determining whether certain factors or patterns contribute to either satisfaction or stress, and several factors that appear relevant to this case study of Alaskan school superintendents are noted and reviewed here. A number of researchers have noted that small and rural school districts are characterized by distinct features that may strongly impact a superintendent's feeling about the position and sense of what is expected and what may be achieved (Alsbury, 2008; Farmer, 2009; Hall, 2008; Lamkin, 2006; Petersen & Williams, 2005a; Rude, Paolucci-Whitcomb, & Comerford, 2005; Shields, 2000; Wallin, 2007; Wolverton, 2004). Given that Alaska's public school system is comprised primarily of rural districts, this issue is of particular interest. However, the state also has several large urban schools, such as Anchorage, Mat Su, Fairbanks, and Juneau districts, thus the somewhat different set of obstacles presented by urban school systems are explored as well (Barnhardt, 2001; Czaja & Harman, 1997; Hess, 2010; Kowalski, 2005a; Resnick & Bryant, 2010). Other stressors related to the superintendency such as federal,

state, and local mandates, stakeholder expectations of the superintendent, school board relationships, and job security are noted (Byrd et al., 2006; Czaja & Harman, 1997; Fale et al., 2009; Farkas et al., 2003; Glass et al., 2000; Natkin et al., 2002a).

The review of literature then proceeds to the issue of superintendent turnover and explores how school board interactions might contribute to superintendents' intention to leave their districts (Byrd et al., 2006; Glass et al., 2000; Lowery et al., 2001; Natkin et al., 2002a; Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001; Petersen & Williams, 2005a; Sell, 2005). Limitations in funding and restricted resources have also been indicated as a predictor of superintendent stress and a potential contributing factor in superintendent turnover (Byrd et al., 2006; Farkas et al., 2003; Glass et al., 2000).

The final section of the literature review focuses closely on superintendent and school board relations, beginning with a brief overview of the history of school governance in the United States and how the roles, responsibilities, and power dynamics between superintendents and school boards have developed over the last two centuries (Campbell, 2001; Glass et al., 2000; Hess, 2010; Maeroff, 2010; Petersen & Williams 2005a; Sell, 2005). The current balance of power, the tensions related to changing ideas on school governance, and where superintendent and school board relations may be headed in the future are considered (Castallo, 2003; Eadie, 2007; Glass et al., 2000; Hess, 2010; Hofman et al., 2002; Petersen & Short, 2001; Petersen & Williams, 2005b; Sell, 2005).

While this literature review identified virtually no recent empirical studies or even general literature exploring school board culture, it is possible to gain some sense of

school board cultures that support and work well with superintendents and those that appear to create environments in which the superintendent and the board are frequently at odds (Alsbury, 2008; Elmore, 2000; Fale et al., 2009; Farkas et al., 2003; Fusarelli, 2006; Glass et al., 2000; Hall, 2008; Kuncham, 2008; Mizell, 2010; Nelson, 2010; Petersen & Williams, 2005a, 2005b; Usdan, 2010). The evidence compellingly indicates that certain environments appear to negatively impact the superintendent's experience of working in the district, and this may prove the key predictor of superintendent turnover (Czaja & Harman, 1997; Eadie, 2007; Garza, 2008; Hofman et al., 2002).

Background to the Problem

There is a growing shortage of qualified candidates for the position of public school superintendent, which is becoming a critical issue. In addition, the rising rates of retirement and superintendent turnover remove current professionals from the field (Lamkin, 2006; Wolverton, 2004). Some researchers have expressed the concern that the number of qualified superintendent candidates will not be sufficient to meet the demand going forward. They have cited the challenges of the profession and the difficulties encountered by many superintendents as dissuasions to those professional educators who might otherwise consider a career as a school superintendent (Jorgenson, 2006; Kowalski et al., 2005). Increasingly, some school districts are turning to "nonprofessionals" to fill their vacant superintendent positions (Pierce, 2005) and some of the literature suggests that hiring noneducators to fill the role of superintendent may create significant problems for the culture of the school and negatively impact educational delivery (Fusarelli, 2006).

It is critical that public schools continue to attract talented professionals with the expertise to successfully navigate the myriad of responsibilities surrounding the profession of school district administration and leadership. This is particularly true at a time when the need to satisfy strict accountability requirements put in place by the NCLB legislation comes up against severe austerity measures confronting most public school systems as America struggles through a major recession that may be verging on serious economic depression. School districts are complicated and diverse social organizations (Petersen & Williams, 2005a). The web of relationships between superintendents, school board members, other school administrators, staff, teachers, parents, students, community representatives, and government officials, is a prominent feature of how these systems operate. One of the central defining characteristics of the school district is the interaction between the superintendent and the school board. There is evidence that the nature of this relationship can have a profound impact on superintendents' ability to lead effectively (Nelson, 2010). There is also indication that troubled superintendent-board relations are a key predictor of a superintendent's intention to leave the position, or the occupation entirely (Byrd et al., 2006; Czaja & Harman, 1997; Eadie, 2007; Garza, 2008; Natkin et al., 2002a).

This research effort has been informed by this evidence and proceeds from an assumption that the dynamic between the school superintendent and the school board is a key contributor to superintendent tenure or turnover. This study focuses on superintendents in the State of Alaska, which has experienced a rate of superintendent turnover nearly double that of the country at large. This condition represents distinct

challenges to public school administration enhanced in part due to its unique geographical position and population demographics (Wolverton, 2004).

Effects of Superintendent Turnover

Given the frequency of superintendent turnover, it is interesting to note that there has been relatively little research into the reasons underlying superintendents' intentions to quit and the determining related factors (Alsbury, 2002, 2008; Byrd et al., 2006; Winter et al., 2007). Fale et al. (2009) noted that high rates of superintendent turnover can result in a loss of experienced professionals who have weathered a variety of school situations. They also observed that while a significant number of superintendent vacancies can allow for greater demographic representation in the profession, as more women and minorities find openings once traditionally filled by Anglo males (Czubaj, 2002; Sharp et al., 2004), the vacuum of experienced professionals can also create a talent shortage, particularly as superintendent vacancies increase and the candidate pool continues to shrink. School districts experiencing relatively high rates of superintendent turnover—for example, three superintendents or more within a 5 or 6 year period—are susceptible to instability in school administration and educational programming. Agendas that are embarked on will often stall, a change of direction will often be initiated, personnel who had strong relationships with the previous superintendent may leave or be forced out, and school reform efforts will often languish in districts with high turnover (Alsbury, 2008).

A quantitative study by Natkin, Cooper, Alborano, Padilla, and Ghosh (2002b) found that superintendents averaged approximately 6 to 7 years in a school district before

moving on, and that this length of tenure remained consistent across a diverse range of district locations and sizes. Rural districts, suburban districts, and urban districts, represented by a wide range of student population demographics and population sizes, all reported similar rates of superintendent turnover. However, this Natkin et al. study also indicated that school districts with fewer economic resources, higher rates of poverty, and intrusive school boards experienced a more frequent turnover rate, sometimes just 2 or 3 years. In fact, there is a compelling degree of evidence, discussed more thoroughly later in this chapter, that school board culture is a decisive element of superintendent tenure.

Natkin et al. (2002b) reported that these higher than average rates of turnover can have a demonstrable, negative impact on educational improvement efforts. They described one school district that had several different superintendents step in over the course of just 6 years. Plans initiated by one superintendent were often shelved or dropped by the subsequent superintendent with different priorities, producing a period of wasteful expenditures on a series of projects that either took years to reach fruition or were abandoned entirely. In addition, Natkin et al. observed that frequency of superintendent turnover often has a corresponding toll on personnel turnover at other levels where administration or staff perceived to be aligned with one vision might be replaced or leave of their own volition once a new superintendent takes over operations. The researchers stated that such trends can negatively impact staff morale, lead to competition and backbiting within the professional environment, and create an atmosphere where innovation stalls as people become concerned about the stability of the work environment. Furthermore, a type of self-fulfilling prophecy effect may be

occurring in districts with high rates of superintendent turnover in that newly-arriving superintendents may anticipate that their tenure will be shorter than usual, and therefore they may be unlikely to attempt to initiate meaningful changes or outline an ambitious vision for the district, assuming they will not be around long enough to realize it. This handicapping of effort at the inception of the superintendent's tenure is likely to create the very conditions that produce rapid turnover, such as superintendent's job dissatisfaction or a loss of confidence of school board and other stakeholders in the superintendent's ability to bring about positive change. This expectation of rapid turnover may also create school board cultures (and staff and administrative cultures) that are more intrusive in their engagement, anticipating that each new superintendent will not be around long enough to implement an agenda and so any proposed changes may be received with some skepticism or unwillingness to change (It's not the board's role..., 2000).

There is also evidence that superintendent turnover indirectly, but meaningfully, impacts instructional effectiveness. Alsbury (2008) employed dissatisfaction theory to consider how politically-motivated superintendent and school board turnover effected student achievement (see also Alsbury, 2002). He surveyed 162 superintendents in Washington State regarding their tenure, the rate of school board turnover, and other community effects, and then correlated these responses with respective test results for students from each superintendent's district. Alsbury's findings indicated there was some adverse link between school board member turnover (and more significant for politically-motivated turnover) and student achievement. Interestingly, Alsbury found that

superintendent turnover did not necessarily impact student achievement. In fact, the evidence indicated that especially in small, rural districts, superintendent longevity seemed to track with declining test scores for students. He also noted that small districts reported the highest rate of superintendent turnover, often of a nonpolitical nature in that the superintendent left to pursue more attractive superintendent positions in larger districts (see also Shields, 2000), and that small districts with high turnover generally maintained high student achievement. Alsbury was hesitant to conclusively interpret these findings other than to note that small districts often attract young or inexperienced superintendents who then move on to better-paying positions in other districts as they gain authority and expertise. It may be that superintendents who remain in small, rural districts for extended periods of tenure may not be those who are competitive on the market and are among the least effective superintendents. If this interpretation is correct, declining student achievement over the course of their extended tenure might be a likely indicator of superintendent leadership stagnation although, as Alsbury's caution suggests, the study did not examine this finding and so this stands as a possible, but not necessarily accurate, understanding of the relationship.

A major concern related to superintendent turnover is superintendent attrition from the field. In their study of 141 Texas public school superintendents, Byrd et al. (2006) found that nearly half of their sample intended to retire within the next 10 years. The researchers stated that they viewed this finding as "especially disquieting" in light of the fact that in the previous 5 years, over 55% of Texas' public school superintendents had left the profession and of the remaining population, just over half had served in the

same district for 5 years or more. In addition, well over a third had changed districts at least once during the course of the researchers' study. This report suggests that the potential for continuity may be greatly compromised by a largely mobile and or retiring population of superintendents.

Alaska's Educational System

Alaska has always presented an anomaly when its school system is considered alongside that of other states (Ahlman, 1986). Just four decades ago, the organization of Alaskan school districts was distinctly different than that seen in most other states, with 27 city and borough districts, as well as 73 schools administered through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), under the aegis of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Additionally, there were 100 state-operated schools (SOS) and two boarding high schools located in various villages throughout the state, serving primarily Alaskan native populations. Gradually the BIA had phased out its control, turning schools over to the state, and eventually to local school districts, to be administered by them, and by 1986 the BIA phase-out was complete. The SOS were disbanded after 1976 as a result of litigation and Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) school districts were established in their wake (Duffy, 1993). The SOS-related litigation also required Alaska school districts to become much more inclusive of Native Alaskan people's concerns and more inclusive in shaping school policy and reforms. Ahlman suggested that the mandatory requirements toward greater community participation, particularly for indigenous populations, eventually led to genuine engagement with local citizen advisory committees working within the REAAs.

One indication that the concerns of the Alaskan Native population have become more prevalent in the shaping of educational policy and reforms is the development of the Alaska Native Knowledge Network' s Guidelines for Culturally Responsive School Boards, which is a set of guidelines to address certain issues relating to the role of school boards in overseeing leadership of formal education systems in Alaska. These guidelines are specific to leadership roles of board members, administrators, communities, professional educators, and statewide policy makers. The guidelines help stakeholders closely examine the educational implications of integrating traditional values and decision making processes in schools throughout Alaska (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 2006).

Alaska's indigenous population is a significant factor in the state's governance in general, and in the schools particularly. Alaska has the highest percentage of native population in the United States, and almost 25% of the student population is comprised of Alaskan natives (as well as a small percentage of American Indians). Of the 626,932 people tallied in the 2000 Alaska state statistics, almost 103,000 were aboriginal Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts who are generally categorized as Alaska Natives.

> In 2001 nearly 60% of Alaska Native students continued to attend school in rural and remote communities where K-12 school enrollments range from eight students with one teacher to 500 students with many teachers. The remaining 40% of Alaska Native students are in urban schools where the majority of the student enrollment is White. The geographic, historical, and cultural context of

> Alaska has always provided challenges and afforded opportunities for schooling that are often unique. (Barnhardt, 2001, p. 1)

Many of the Alaskan natives living in rural areas reside in small communities with populations ranging between 25 and 5,000 people. Across the range of communities, many of which are remote and separated by many thousands of miles from one another, there are as many as 20 different languages spoken, although Barnhardt noted that virtually all Alaskan Natives are proficient in at least one of the four dominant Native language families.

Today, Alaska has 53 public school districts and one state-run school, each with a superintendent and school board governing district operations. Recent statistics reported by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) revealed that Alaska had 131,661 students enrolled during the 2009-2010 school year (Chen, 2011) and over 30,300 of these students were classified as American Indian or Alaska Native. In 2008-2009, the state's Department of Education (DOE) reported that while graduation rates were on the rise even as the state was experiencing declining enrollments, there was still room for improvement regarding student standardized test scores and adequate yearly progress (AYP) targets (Alaska Department of Education, 2009). Median household income for Alaskans is $52,807 as compared to a national median of $36,135 (Alaska Public School Review, 2011). The state's geographical vastness, the presence of far-flung and remote rural school districts, the imperative to effectively serve a diverse population of White majority students, Native Alaskans, and other minority students, all conspire to shape a particularly complex educational environment (Jones & Ongtooguk, 2002).

Alaska Superintendents

There is very little literature available on the state of the superintendency in Alaska. A recent online article on an Alaskan political blog, announcing the retirement of Alaskan superintendent Carol Comeau, provides a useful snapshot of a current superintendency in the state (AlaskaPride, 2011). Comeau, who was retiring after 38 years of service in the Anchorage school district, the last 12 of which were as superintendent of the Anchorage district schools, earned a base salary of $176,000 in 2010-2011. The piece also noted that Comeau had worked her way up through the educational ranks from teacher's aide, to principal, to central office administrator, to the superintendency. The article observed that Comeau had taken the position of Anchorage superintendent in 2000 after a period of turmoil for the district with the previous superintendent who was reported to be ineffective and polarizing, precipitating labor unrest in the schools and high staff turnover. Conversely, Comeau's leadership was lauded as competent and transparent. She "earned the confidence of the school board to such an extent that the board was sometimes criticized for being a 'rubber stamp' of the superintendent," a charge the author of the piece dismissed as inaccurate.

One dissertation study, conducted over a quarter of a century ago, examined whether Alaska superintendents shared the same vision and understanding of their role and function as that held by their school boards. This dissertation reflected a final population of 45 superintendents (out of a possible 54 for the entire state) and 32 school board chairpersons. The researcher, Ahlman (1986), reported that all 45 superintendents stated that their role was significantly impacted by the expectations held by their school

boards and, to a lesser degree, community members, parents, principals, and staff. The results of the study also turned up substantial discrepancies between responsibilities the superintendent understood were within his job duties, and those which the school board chairperson identified as a function the board expected to fulfill, such as communicating educational plans to the press and to governmental agencies. There was also indication that a majority of school boards desired and sought greater involvement in selecting the team to work with and support the superintendent, traditionally a determination that is left in the superintendent's domain. Further, Ahlman cited research indicating that many of Alaska's school boards were comprised of members representing different community factions and that, consequently, there was often little consensus among individual board members as to the board's expectations for their district superintendent. Ahlman also reported that, at the time of the study, 41% of the superintendents had neither assistant superintendents nor business managers on staff, and so the superintendents were assuming many of the duties associated with those positions in addition to performing their own duties as superintendents.

In drawing conclusions from her study, Ahlman (1986) expressed concern at what she identified as a pattern of Alaskan school board chairpersons asserting themselves in areas traditionally under the direction of the superintendent and which the superintendents in her study also identified as traditional duties of the superintendent. The researcher referenced previous studies showing that greater board intrusiveness in the work of the superintendency produces greater levels of stress for the superintendent and is a contributing factor in superintendents' intention to leave a position.

Duffy (1993) conducted a dissertation research study on the potential for role conflict between Alaskan superintendents, school boards, and other school administrators in interpreting REAA guidelines for the position of superintendent. Thirteen superintendents, constituting 65% of REAA district superintendents, 99 administrators (71%), and 55 board members (41%) responded to Duffy's questionnaire. It is noteworthy that the majority of the respondents (84%) "were from districts accessible primarily by airplane" (p. 60) and that only 14% worked in districts that were "located on a road system" (p. 61). These small, but important, details hint at one of the significant challenges for both superintendents working in Alaska, and for those who would seek to assess the state of the Alaskan superintendency or the operation of school districts overall (Wolverton, 2004). The fact that the non-contiguous State of Alaska is still, by some measures, a frontier state with a significant indigenous population that has struggled at times with federal and state government efforts to assimilate it, cannot be dismissed when considering the nature of the Alaskan educational system. Alaskan superintendents experience circumstances and challenges that may be wholly different from those encountered by their peers in other parts of the United States.

Over 81% of the REAA superintendents, board members, and administrators surveyed by Duffy (1993) worked in school districts serving less than 600 students, and approximately 22% had three superintendents in the previous 6-year period. Half of the respondents reported that their district's current superintendent had lived in Alaska for at least a decade, while another 16% were not sure how long their superintendent had resided in the state. However, Duffy rejected the reports of the respondents on tenure and

residency, noting the figures he was provided with did not match up with the Alaskan statistical facts he reviewed. The questionnaire addressed five general areas of the superintendent's image, perceived areas of responsibility, the superintendent's personal characteristics, the superintendent's professional skills, and the superintendent's leadership style. Overall, there was general agreement between superintendents, administrators, and board members on the superintendent's role, and differences were a matter of degree rather than oppositional assessments. The most notable feature of Duffy's findings was that the school board members saw themselves as having greater authority and responsibility in the area of the superintendent's position objectives and realm of authority than either superintendents or administrators agreed was appropriate. This was particularly evident in situations where board members identified themselves as the chief executive officer or educational leader. However, Duffy also observed that without exception, the school board members did not assume a responsibility for position objectives that was greater than that they accorded to the superintendent; rather, Duffy suggested, they appeared "to be communicating that they want to share with the superintendent in the governance of the school district, not control it" (Duffy, 1993, p. 85).

Challenges of the Superintendent's Various Roles

The position of superintendent of schools, while critically important to the effective operation of our nation's public education system, is one that comes with a number of distinct challenges and is not nearly as well revered as positions of equivalent responsibility and significance in the private sector (Byrd et al., 2006). Superintendents

of schools are much less likely than their private sector counterparts to realize long-term job security or substantial benefits and they must balance and respond to a host of stakeholders with sometimes competing interests, including school boards, school staff, parents, students, community leaders, and governmental agencies. The implementation of NCLB has, by many reports, further complicated the work of superintendents and has impacted relationships with the various stakeholders in some meaningful ways (Farkas et al., 2003; Firestone, 2009; Fuller et al., 2005; Fusarelli, 2006; Ginsberg & Multon, 2011; Harris et al., 2006; Pascopella, 2008; Petersen & Williams, 2005a, 2005b).

The evolving role of the superintendency suggests that the most successful superintendents are those able to negotiate several different and primary functions (Andero, 2000). Glass et al. (2000) observed that "education literature has focused on instructional leadership as the key to being an effective principal or superintendent" (p. vi). However, the large nationwide sample of superintendents surveyed for the American Association of School Administration (AASA) revealed that the majority of superintendents understood that their boards expected them to be managerial leaders and instructional (educational) leaders in roughly equal measures. Another 13% stated their school board had expectations of them as political leaders for the school district, while 3% believed their boards saw them as leaders of reform (inspirational or visionary leaders). Glass et al. surmised from these findings that as much as there is an idea of the superintendent as visionary instructional leader, in fact it "appears that superintendents and boards may not feel the urgency for implementation of school reform initiatives to the degree held by some politicians, policy specialists, and others engaged in the multi-

billion-dollar school reform industry" (p. vii). Instead, the AASA survey offered a rather more prosaic picture of the superintendent's role, a daily negotiation and balancing act of several primary forms of leadership expectations, all directed toward the goal of trying to achieve improvements in the educational delivery of their school district.

Education supervisor. The superintendent as educational leader is the most readily apparent role associated with the position. Chan et al. (2001) noted that of the 50 top superintendents in the nation, as identified by the AASA 2000 survey, three-quarters of them stated their primary role was to serve as instructional leader (as opposed to managerial, political, or inspirational roles). The findings would appear to bear out the centrality of this expectation, at least in the case of superintendents of the largest school districts. Glass et al. (2000) reported that 48.4% of superintendents in districts of 25,000 or more students, and 50.8% of superintendents in districts of 3,000 to 24,999 students, stated that their boards perceived their primary role to be the educational leader for the district. The percentages were lower for the two smaller classifications of school districts, with 36.1% of superintendents in districts of 300 to 2,999 students and 34.8% of superintendents in districts with less than 300 students reporting their school boards saw their primary function as educational supervisor.

The stringent guidelines of the NCLB have substantively shaped the educational environment today. Superintendents, school administrators, and staff are required to remain vigilant about adequate yearly progress (AYP) as established by standardized testing for their schools in order to guarantee continued control and realization of funding and other support. The NCLB requirements mandate that schools demonstrate that they

are effectively serving all students and meeting testing goals. These goals are based, in part, on comparative analyses with students in other schools across the nation, and these goals have drawn support from some quarters where the requirements are seen to strengthen accountability. However, there is also a great deal of criticism of NCLB, which states that it prioritizes one type of learning, directed toward rote memorization and mastery of probable test items, to the detriment of a holistic curriculum supporting critical thinking across a range of art and science disciplines.

Firestone (2009) addressed the issue of NCLB, noting the challenges that accountability demands place on educational leaders. The researcher stated that "an accountability culture is not as effective as the student learning culture in promoting achievement" (p. 671). By *student learning culture*, the researcher meant that the focus is less on accountability via standardized testing and more on classroom interactions that place the relationships with students and instructional methodologies of teachers at the forefront. Firestone contended that the implementation of a student learning culture lies with the superintendent, supported by the school board, who is able to initiate and advocate for a student-centered approach to learning.

The matter of support for the student-learning focused superintendent is critical, Firestone (2009) argued. The researcher noted that districts successful in creating student-learning cultures had school boards that recognized the importance of a superintendent committed to improving student learning and achievement; these boards selected and supported candidates for the position who met this criterion. In districts where superintendents struggled to realize or maintain the school board's confidence, the

efforts to create student-learning cultures floundered. A notable case of school reform efforts in San Diego under the administration of school superintendent Al Bersin were fatally hamstrung, Firestone stated, by a school board that failed to come to a workable understanding and articulation of what the goals of reform were and how the board should empower and support the superintendent.

The superintendent's role as educational leader can produce some of the greatest stress on the job, Byrd et al. (2006) reported. They cited research revealing that over half of superintendents' surveyed reported that the greatest challenge in their work was the prospect of raising student achievement in order to meet AYP and district expectations. The flip side of this finding is research indicating that superintendents who are actively engaged in curriculum development and communicate directly and regularly with administrators and staff tend to lead districts that perform successfully (Petersen, 2002).

Manager. A successful manager recognizes those employees who will get behind initiatives and commit to realizing organizational objectives; the same is true for effective superintendents (Browne-Ferrigno & Glass, 2005). Firestone (2009) made this point when noting that superintendents seeking to improve their districts' educational cultures must be willing to wisely exert their formal authority (Firestone, 2009, p. 675). Some authority, the researcher stated, is symbolic in nature, with the superintendent signaling priorities through appearances or presentations, while other forms of authority are more direct, such as determining what resources are committed where and establishing an agenda for curriculum reform. Another managerial role the superintendent assumes is in the identification and recruitment of personnel who support

the superintendent's vision, and persuading or removing personnel who are not in line with that vision.

Data from the 2000 AASA superintendent survey revealed that, after educational leader, managerial leader was the role superintendents' perceived their school boards expected them to fulfill. This was most notably the case in the smaller school districts, with 42.9% of superintendents of districts with 300 to 2,999 students, and 46% of superintendents of districts with less than 300 pupils. However, the expectation of the superintendent to fulfill a managerial role was reported to be dramatically lower by superintendents in the largest district classification of 25,000 students or more. Here, only 7.4% of the superintendents reported that their school boards expected them to serve as a managerial leader. The next largest district classification (3,000 to 24,999 students) revealed that 20.8% of the superintendents, fewer than half that of the smaller district superintendents, believed their boards expected them to fulfill a managerial role. This difference is interesting, particularly because school boards in districts of less than 3,000 students were reported as likelier to expect their superintendents to be managerial leaders even more than educational leaders. Another striking feature of this finding is that the largest school districts are the likeliest to hire non-educators—and thus executives perceived to have greater managerial instincts—to serve as superintendents. One might anticipate therefore, that the largest school districts would report the highest ratio of expectation for the superintendent as managerial leader and yet this does not appear to be the case. Rather, the smallest districts seem to prioritize this role. On a perhaps related contextual note, a 2001 study by Byrd, and cited by Byrd et al. (2006) found that the

managerial style of superintendents had a significant effect on student achievement; in fact, the managerial effect was much more pronounced than that of the superintendents' leadership style, which had negligible to no impact on student achievement (p. 2). The Byrd study, the researchers noted, indicated that open communication between superintendents and stakeholders was the key contributor to creating a school culture that fostered student achievement.

Inspirational leader. In order to realize educational improvements or more comprehensive reform efforts, effective superintendents articulate a clear vision of change that all the stakeholders can reference. Meaningful change often engenders some initial resistance; many stakeholders, because they are human, can be anxious or suspect of transformative efforts, preferring the status quo "known" to the unknown. A superintendent who intends to usher in change will invariably be confronted with such concerns and in order to successfully realize the change objectives, the superintendent has to model and support a new way of thinking that encourages those resistant to endorse the proposed modifications (Firestone, 2009).

There is evidence that of the key potential roles associated with the superintendency, inspirational leader is the least likely to be expected as defining a superintendent's leadership. Glass et al. (2000) reported that fewer than 10% of superintendents, across all district sizes, stated their school boards expected them to be inspirational leaders for school change, a leader of reform (Glass et al., 2000, p. 63). Superintendents of the largest district category were most likely to cite this role as expected of them (8.4%) but only 4.3% of superintendents of the next largest district

classification did so, and this dropped substantially for the second smallest and smallest districts (2.1% and 1.6%, respectively).

Politician. A number of superintendents surveyed in the 2000 AASA survey indicated that their school boards expected them to primarily execute political leadership in their position, with the greatest number of superintendents (18%) representing districts ranging between 3,000 and 24,999 students. A slightly lower percentage of superintendents from the largest classification of district (25,000 students or more) reported that their school boards expected them to serve as political leaders first, while 11.2% of superintendents of the second smallest districts and 8.4% of superintendents from the smallest districts (fewer than 300 students) perceived their school boards as expecting them to fulfill the role of superintendent as politician (Chan et al., 2001).

There are a variety of ways in which the superintendent's position may be viewed as political. Given the range of interests, and sometimes competing interests, of the various stakeholders (parents, teachers, community activists, and leaders) the superintendent's job entails negotiation, persuasion, and accommodation, all directed toward achieving a particular end (Bjork & Gurley, 2005). These skills may be even more necessary when it comes to the superintendent's relationship with the school board. The school board itself is subject to a good deal of political pressure with board members directly elected or appointed to their positions by elected officials. As Glass et al. (2000) noted, superintendents in their nationwide study recognized the political pressure experienced by their school board members, noting that they often had to answer to community groups and party officials in relation to their board considerations and

decision-making. This was especially true in large and urban school districts where a range of different community pressure groups was seen to exert pressure on board members. This awareness informed the superintendents' own sense of the necessity of developing political savvy in order to be able to work with board members subject to these external pressures. The superintendents responding to the Glass et al. survey largely believed that their school board members genuinely attempted to work for the good of the school and community and, on average, the superintendents stated their school boards accepted the superintendents' policy recommendations between 83% and 90% of the time.

While the role of politician may be something that suits some superintendents, there is evidence that the majority of superintendents do not like engaging in political maneuvering as an aspect of their professional careers (Campbell, 2001). In a survey of over 1,000 randomly sampled public school superintendents, Farkas et al. (2003) found that 82% of the superintendent respondents rated "politics and bureaucracy" as the likeliest reason for superintendent attrition. The second highest reason identified (at a low 13% of the superintendent population) was unreasonable expectations related to standards and accountability. "Low pay and prestige," which ranked third in the superintendents' responses to this issue, garnered only 3%, with the remaining 2% stating they were "not sure" what was most predictive of superintendent attrition. Another question revealed that 47% of the superintendents stated that they could usually get things done the way they want but they must work "around the system" so to speak. Another 35% reported the system enabled them to get things accomplished, while 15%

reported they felt hamstrung by their district's culture in their efforts to achieve goals, and the remaining 3% did not commit to one of these three responses. One implication of these findings is that the superintendency is characterized by daily political considerations. Another implication is that even talented and successful superintendents may find the navigation of these politics and the bureaucratic policies—that often emerge from political agreements and compromises—a distasteful or overwhelming feature of their day-to-day work, and one that distracts from their efforts to improve educational delivery to students (Farkas et al., 2003, pp. 49-50; Whritner, 2009).

Challenges Related to District Type

There are a myriad of factors that may shape the superintendent's experience of working in a given school district and that can contribute to superintendent determinations to remain in or leave the superintendency. Several of these factors are outlined here for (a) their relationship to the issues considered in this research, (b) to provide context for research discussed later in this chapter, as well as for (c) their specific relevance to the case study of Alaskan superintendents and school boards.

Rural school districts. Petersen and Williams (2005a) observed that superintendents working in small districts serving relatively small numbers of students—a feature that characterizes many rural school districts—may be especially susceptible to negative perceptions of their leadership style. They referenced the concept of cultural capital and its acknowledgement of the tendency in human activities and interactions to endorse the familiar and approach with some wariness or skepticism new or unfamiliar approaches or styles (Rude et al., 2005). In larger school districts, the effects of the

superintendent's style are likely mitigated by the presence of a range of stakeholder personalities, beliefs, and styles. In smaller districts, the superintendent is more visible and thus more vulnerable to criticism. Additionally, small and rural school districts are more isolated, often have limited resources, and are generally perceived to lack the prestige associated with living and working in suburban or urban cosmopolitan areas (Lamkin, 2006; Wallin, 2007; Wolverton, 2004). For these reasons, rural districts experience frequent superintendent turnover and may attract the least experienced or least qualified candidates (Alsbury, 2008; Shields, 2000).

Lamkin (2006) conducted focus group interviews with 58 superintendents working in rural districts based in New York, Pennsylvania, and Tennessee. One of the key findings of the study was that the rural superintendents expressed feeling stressed by the tension between the educational and managerial roles of their work. They stated that their primary interest, and the reason they became superintendents, was to serve as the instructional leader for the district, but their work in their rural communities placed significant demands on them to fulfill the role of manager. They described their district's small size and limited resources as (a) intensifying a sense of isolation from other school leaders in larger communities, and as (b) requiring them to assume responsibility for tasks they did not feel they were adequately prepared for, such as handling day-to-day details of student transportation or addressing problems with school buildings and facilities. Almost all of the rural superintendents surveyed strongly expressed their frustration at not having enough staff or support, requiring them to cover functions that were far removed from pursuing the educational agenda. Another feature of their rural

district identified by some of the superintendents as an obstacle to their work was the high visibility, lack of privacy, and prevalence of "emotionalism and gossip," which they contended further hampered their efforts both with the school board and with the community (Lamkin, 2006, p. 21). Farmer (2009) similarly asserted that the influence of community and special interest groups can be especially intense in rural districts because there is little incentive in a small community to press against popularly expressed values. Additionally, in small communities marked by rates of low community involvement, the influence of a vocal minority can have a disproportionate impact on district policies and goals.

The challenge presented by limited funding and fewer resources available to rural districts was discussed by Farmer (2009) in terms of the difficulties created for rural superintendents. For example, rural districts often have higher per student transportation costs than suburban and urban school districts because students tend not to be concentrated in given areas and are rather dispersed across a larger but less populated geographic area. Rural districts also have smaller class sizes, reflecting the smaller population base, than seen in larger school districts. While this may contribute to higher student achievement—a positive feature of rural size—it also incurs higher costs for the district as more teachers are required to serve fewer students across the grade levels. As Hall (2008) observed in a study of largely rural superintendents leading small and underfunded districts in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, rural districts are less likely to be able to draw on community connections or local resources when shortfalls in school funding occur. Farmer noted that in difficult financial times, urban and suburban school

districts have been able to form partnerships with corporate sponsors that infuse much needed monies into the system, but such partnerships are rarely seen in small, rural school districts.

Urban school districts. Though dominated by small, rural school districts, Alaska also has a few large school districts serving urban areas. While these areas differ significantly from cities like New York and Los Angeles, in terms of size and demographics, as well as social, cultural, and political factors, it is worth noting some of the common issues confronted by superintendents working in urban areas. Anchorage, Fairbanks, Mat Su, and Juneau are urban districts with large and often modern educational facilities that serve a significant percentage of the state's indigenous population as well as a White majority (Barnhardt, 2001).

Czaja and Harman (1997) noted that urban school districts provide significant challenges and that conventional wisdom holds that superintendent turnover in urban districts is high. They referenced Kowalski's (2005b) perspective that urban districts are mirrors of the most disruptive conditions in a society (e.g., poverty, crime), that they often lack the necessary resources to address these conditions, and that the heterogeneous range of different groups and interests require a high degree of political acumen to deal with effectively in order to get anything of significance accomplished. Resnick and Bryant (2010) made the argument that the nation's 14,350 school boards have been unfavorably maligned because of a handful of widely-reported cases of mismanagement in high-profile urban school districts in which local government has stepped in to replace school boards or take over the schools. Hess (2010) similarly identified the external

stresses experienced in urban school districts with a range of often-competing stakeholders placing demands on school boards and superintendents. However, less than 1% of the nation's school districts account for the nation's largest or most troubled cities. Almost three quarters of school districts serve populations of less than 3,000 students. They contended that the vast majority of school boards successfully engage in school governance, working effectively with their district superintendents to meet challenges and work toward improving educational outcomes for students.

Challenges Related to the Changing Education Regulations and Climate

The range of potential stressors that can impact superintendents' experience of their work situations is great, and specific factors will inevitably effect individual superintendents differently. But the limited research on superintendent stress does indicate that certain factors resonate across a majority of the professional population more so than others. The nationwide sample of over 1,000 superintendents surveyed by Farkas et al. (2003) reported that an overwhelming majority (86%) stated that federal, state, and local mandates occupied an unreasonable amount of their work time and attention. Even more significant was the number of superintendents (98%) who agreed with the statement that the superintendency is a "high-stress, high-visibility job—you have to be able to withstand a lot of heat;" in fact, 79% of the sample not just endorsed the statement but also strongly agreed with it (Farkas et al., 2003, p. 53). Glass et al. (2000) reported that the stressors encountered by superintendents have long been understood to be great, and they observed that several surveys conducted between 1990 and 2000 showed that superintendents over this decade reported consistently high levels

of stress, with approximately half of the population reporting "very great" or "considerable" stress (Glass et al., 2000, pp. v-vi).

One of the major stressors can be trying to balance the school board's expectations of the superintendent's role as leader—as outlined in the previous section—with the district agenda the superintendent is attempting to realize. Glass et al. (2000) observed that most superintendents are astute enough to recognize their school boards' expectations of them, and they will often do their best to meet these expectations. However, some expectations—for instance, expecting the superintendent to focus on political leadership—may run counter to the superintendent's instincts, style, or understanding about what's necessary for the well-being of the school district. This can be a source of great stress for a superintendent attempting to navigate these competing demands. Additionally, a shift in general expectations as to the superintendent's function—one that Glass et al. identified as occurring substantially during the decade of the 1990s—has brought the role of the superintendent as educational (or instructional) leader to the forefront. But even as this has occurred it did not supplant the superintendent's managerial responsibilities or reduce expectations of school boards that superintendents would continue to serve as managerial leaders. Thus, Glass et al. reported, "the expectations for superintendents have increased, but neither support staff nor salary levels have been increased" (Glass et al., 2000, p. 64).

Fale et al. (2009) reported that much of the stress superintendents in the State of New York identified in their professional lives could be traced back to their relationships with their school boards. Almost 10% of the New York superintendent population

identified their school boards as ineffective (in some cases, very ineffective). The researchers found that for these superintendents, the levels of job dissatisfaction and professional stress were significantly higher than for those superintendents who identified their boards as effective partners. While 57% of superintendents with effective boards reported experiencing greater stress in the job than they had anticipated, 78% of those with ineffective boards identified greater stress than expected. Additionally, those superintendents with ineffective boards, when asked if they would encourage their child to consider a superintendent career, only 35% indicated they would, as compared to 64% of superintendents working with effective boards. Finally, while 71% of the superintendents with effective boards said they would choose the same career again, only 53% of the superintendents with ineffective boards would opt for a career as superintendent if presented with the choice again. The impact of an ineffective board on the superintendent's experience of his or her profession is clearly significant.

The issue of job security can be a pressing one for superintendents. Given the level of political relations that characterize the superintendent's professional life, the potential for being fired and replaced clearly exists and may present a distraction for superintendents' attempting to pursue an educational agenda. The data on superintendents' perceptions of their vulnerability is somewhat mixed. As some researchers have noted, there is a generally held belief that the essential nature of the superintendent's position is unstable (Byrd et al., 2006; Czaja & Harman, 1997; Natkin et al., 2002a). However the superintendents surveyed by Farkas et al. (2003) were clear in their belief that their positions were secure, with 70% seeing their jobs as "very secure"

over the next 2 years while an additional 26% reported feeling "somewhat secure." Only 2% reported not feeling secure "at all," and another 2% felt "not too secure" (Farkas et al., 2003, p. 70).

Superintendent Turnover

A number of factors may contribute to a superintendent's decision to leave a district, and some of these are discussed below. The superintendents surveyed in the 2000 AASA study reported that the likeliest reason to leave a superintendency was to take a new one in a larger or better-paying district (37.9%). However, the second likeliest cause of superintendent's determination to leave was identified as "conflict with board member" (14.6%). Superintendents in the smaller school districts reported this to be a more significant issue than did superintendents in the largest districts; for instance, almost 25% of superintendents in schools with less than 300 pupils identified board conflict as a predictor of leaving, as compared to 10.2% of superintendents in districts of 25,000 students or more. This finding suggests that superintendents working in smaller districts may be more prone to adverse board influence or subject to greater school board intrusiveness than superintendents in large districts experience. Other predictors of intention to leave a superintendent position included retirement, lack of school funding, board elections, family considerations, and other opportunities in the education field. Glass et al.'s (2000) survey findings for the AASA revealed that 45% of school superintendents had pursued and received doctoral degrees, with the majority of these degrees (almost 90%) granted in educational supervision or administration disciplines.

On a related note, Natkin et al. (2002a) determined that for each level of education achieved, superintendent median tenure increased by a year.

School board relations. A quantitative study conducted by Natkin et al. (2002b) found that school board intervention in school management decisions was one of the key predictors of superintendent longevity. Another study found that superintendent conflict with the school board was a key determinant of superintendents' intention to leave the district (Rausch, 2001). The superintendents in the 2000 AASA survey weighted their relations with their school boards as the sixth greatest obstacle to their effectiveness (at 83.1% of the entire sample). The only obstacles ranked greater for inhibiting professional effectiveness were financing, mandatory testing requirements, accountability standards, constantly shifting educational reform trends, and changing curriculum priorities and best practices.

Given that the relationship between the superintendent and the school board in many ways must be interdependent if it is to be successful, if the relationship is strained, it is difficult to effect agreement and go forward in confidence with an agenda (Lowery et al., 2001; Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001). For either or both parties in the relationship, to experience a degree of mistrust is a likely way to ensure that work efforts will be complicated and improvement initiatives stalled (Petersen & Williams, 2005a; Sell, 2005). The impact of the superintendent and school board relationship is explored fully, later in this chapter.

Resource availability. There is evidence that a lack of available resources and support can negatively impact superintendents' tenure. Some study results have strongly

indicated that districts characterized by a high level of poverty—often in combination with other factors such as intrusive school board interference or insufficient structural support—contribute to greater than normal frequency in superintendent turnover (Byrd et al., 2006). The superintendents sampled in Farkas et al.'s (2003) study largely agreed that districts with greater financial resources "invariably get the cream of the crop" in terms of educators and administrators, with 27% strongly agreeing with the statement and an additional 46% generally agreeing with the statement (p. 54). Additionally, 85% of the superintendents reported that during their current tenure, funding for their school district had gotten worse, while the demands of NCLB and regulation requirements related to special education had increased and placed further drain on already limited resources. Glass et al. (2000) identified limited financial resources as "a historical finding" insofar as each nationwide Ten-Year Study conducted by AASA has found that increasingly limited dollars targeted for school programs plagued superintendents and school boards in their efforts to strengthen educational delivery to students (Glass et al., 2000, p. vi). The 2000 AASA study revealed that 96.7% of the superintendents surveyed identified school financing as the most significant factor inhibiting their professional effectiveness.

Studying superintendent turnover. Byrd et al. (2006) conducted a survey of 141 superintendents working in public school districts in Texas. The districts represented covered a range of demographics and sizes, though the superintendents themselves were mostly Anglo (92.2%) and male (87.9%). Just over half had a master's degree along with additional coursework, another 10% held a master's degree, almost 30% had an Ed.D.,

8.5% had earned a Ph.D., and one superintendent held a Doctorate of Juris Prudence. Subjects' salaries ranged between $60,000 to over $100,000, with just under half of the population earning over $100,000. The female superintendents averaged longer tenures at 6.2 years to male superintendents' average of 4.8 years. Further, Byrd et al. reported that for superintendents who had changed districts within the last 5 years, the average tenure was 3.2 years, while for superintendents who had been in the same district for 5 years or longer, the average tenure was 10.2 years, representing a significant difference between these two groups of superintendents.

Byrd et al. (2006) administered the Texas Superintendent Survey, a 29-item instrument created by the researchers and drawing upon previously verified surveys for this population, in order to identify factors impacting superintendent tenure. Superintendents who had less than 5 years tenure in their district were identified as *mobile* while those who had a tenure of 5 years or longer in their school district were identified as *stationary*. Based on the survey responses, the researchers found that 32.7% of the mobile superintendents reported *somewhat to very difficult* working relationships with the presidents of their school boards, as compared to 13.9% of the stationary superintendents who reported *somewhat to very difficult* relationships with board presidents. Byrd et al. reported there was a clear correlation between length of superintendent tenure and reported difficulty of the relationship with the school board president; superintendents with the longest periods of tenure reported the lowest levels of conflict in their relationships with their board presidents. Further, the researchers noted, mobile superintendents provided additional information indicating that struggles with

board members or "characteristics of the board" (i.e., board culture) were key predictors of their intention to leave the district (Byrd et al., 2006, p. 7).

Despite the fact that stationary superintendents reported fewer difficulties with school board presidents than mobile superintendents, the stationary superintendents (47.2%) were more likely to identify superintendent and school board relationship and communication as a key factor in job insecurity for superintendents than were the mobile superintendents (38.5%). Over 75% of the mobile superintendents reported that increasing politics within the profession contributed to professional instability, while 55% of the stationary superintendents cited politics as a contributor to job instability. These figures are somewhat lower than those reported by Farkas et al. (2003) with 82% of superintendents in their study citing politics as a key predictor of superintendent attrition. The superintendents in Byrd et al.'s (2006) study with the shortest periods of tenure reported the highest scores for linking politics to job instability. Another interesting finding was that over 72% of the superintendents who were stationary, serving in their district for 5 years or more, had started their superintendent's career in their current district. Byrd et al. also noted that once superintendents passed the 5-year mark in a given district, their average tenure increased substantially. Conversely, the mobile superintendents were likely to leave their districts for better opportunities elsewhere (62.5%), although 20% of the mobile superintendents stated they had left their previous district for their current position because they felt unsupported by the school board in their administrative efforts.

Byrd et al. (2006) reported that their analysis of their data established that the superintendent's relationship with the school board, and especially the relationship with the board president, was a significant factor in superintendent turnover. On a somewhat related note, increased politics was found to be a contributor to superintendent turnover as well, and the superintendents who commented on political influence cited the deleterious effect that intrusive legislative decisions and partisanship had on their ability to effectively execute meaningful educational change and improvement. Dealing with these political considerations and the attendant bureaucracy proved frustrating and discouraging to many of the superintendents sampled for the study. Byrd et al. concluded their study with a call for more research into the nature of superintendent and school board relations, stating this relationship was "vital in determining superintendent tenure," and they specifically observed that a high degree of "board involvement in managing the school district and the politics involved was found to be increasingly troubling to many superintendents" (p. 9).

Superintendent and School Board Relations

A brief history of the evolution of superintendent and school board relations. The primary role of the superintendent as the leader of the school district and the key person responsible for determining the direction of educational instruction emerged over time. In 19th century America, the school board was the primary leader of the schools, working directly with teachers and principals to set the educational agenda for the district. Early superintendents were little more than supervisors who carried out the school board's wishes (Campbell, 2001; Glass et al., 2000). Hiring of administration and

staff, determining funding for programming, making decisions about curriculum, building maintenance, class schedules and educational calendars, and all manner of resource allocations were the responsibility of the school board.

Glass et al. (2000) stated that with the turn of the 20th century and the rise of the business class, the idea of a managerial efficiency being concentrated in an executive who is specially trained to execute professional tasks took hold across industries, and the theory of public school administration was impacted as well. During the first three decades of the century, superintendents began to consolidate their authority, shaping school boards to observe a more corporate-board style of governance, as boards serving in an advisory capacity and signing off on the work of the superintendent who had assumed more direct control of daily operations in the school district (Hess, 2010). In the middle of the century, superintendents began to define themselves as instructional leaders, adapting the executive position to include a more education-centric focus (Campbell, 2001; Maeroff, 2010). Glass et al. reported that this view of the superintendency remained in place until the 1990s when, they observed, school boards began to assert themselves and intervene more directly in the determinations of school operations, thereby exerting control in areas that had come to be considered the superintendent's domain. This engendered some conflict, and this sense of a shifting power dynamic between school boards and superintendents continues to inform discussion of and inquiry into the relationship of superintendents and school boards today (Sell, 2005).

Petersen and Williams (2005a) described school districts as "complex, unpredictable social organizations" and noted that a confluence of stressors can impact the dynamics of the organization at any time. Federal regulations, state and local policies, and initiatives such as those arising from the Civil Rights Movement, the Title IX Amendment, NCLB, and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its amendments often require immediate adjustments to school district's focus and operation. Invariably these adjustments will have an effect on the work of the district administration. Sometimes these challenges can be weathered smoothly and with little interruption to the relationships of the stakeholders; however, tension and some turmoil will accompany these changes as the parties resist or struggle to accommodate the changes and adapt their roles to meet the challenges with which they are confronted.

A discussion of current superintendent and school board relations. The literature on superintendent and school board relations abounds with intimations of constant tension periodically erupting into power struggles. Glass et al. (2000) argued that conflict between superintendents and their school boards is not indicated as the norm by the empirical evidence of the 2000 AASA study, at least not to the degree that its primacy in the literature would appear to suggest (see also Hess, 2010; Petersen & Williams, 2005b). However, Glass et al. did note the potential for conflict to arise in situations where boundaries between the superintendent's role and the work of the school board members was not clearly identified (see also Sell, 2005). When "role conflict" occurs, they stated, it is rarely so significant as to disrupt school management operations; however, they did add that role conflict is one of the key predictors of school

superintendents running afoul of their school board's aims and then leaving to move on to other positions.

One key finding of the 2000 AASA study was that a great number of superintendents (36.7%) identified policy initiation to be an activity they shared with their school boards, whereas fewer superintendents (28.5%) surveyed in the AASA's 1992 study identified this as an activity they shared. Glass et al. (2000) noted that the shared responsibility was most prevalent in large school districts, while superintendents of small school districts tended to remain the primary leaders of policy initiation. The researchers speculated that, overall, the increase in shared responsibility for policy initiatives might indicate a fundamental change in how school districts are governed going forward, with superintendents relinquishing some measure of centralized authority for decision-making and implementation (see also Castallo, 2003; Hofman et al., 2002).

A school-board-centric perspective on superintendent and school board relations was offered by Eadie (2007) and provides useful context for considering the potential for tensions in the relationship between superintendent and school board. Eadie advised school boards, when hiring a new superintendent, to look for a "board-savvy" individual, one who embraces the school board, will use his or her leadership to "build board governing capacity," and who demonstrates managerial skills in terms of the business of school governance (Eadie, 2007, p. 42). Further, Eadie identified superintendents who express concern over school board members who intrude on educational decisions without having a professional knowledge of the subject matter as old-school defensive

types of superintendents. Eadie cautioned school boards to seek out superintendent candidates who are willing to share active governance with the school board.

Another school-board perspective was provided by Petersen and Short (2001) in their intriguing study examining the effects of social style, as considered through the lens of social influence theory, on the school board's responsiveness to the superintendent. The researchers surveyed 131 randomly selected school board presidents for their perceptions as to their superintendents' effectiveness in getting policies and agendas supported by the school boards. The researchers found that superintendent characteristics of trustworthiness, assertiveness, expertise, attractiveness, and empathetic expressiveness all had meaningful, positive effects on school board presidents' assessments of their superintendents' effectiveness in their relations with the school boards. Additionally, the researchers expressed some surprise and interest in the finding that the school board presidents they surveyed reported that they had "very limited influence" on board decision-making and particularly in terms of setting the school board agenda. By and large the school board presidents reported that their district superintendents tended to set the agenda and that the school board was largely dependent on the superintendent's professional expertise in guiding discussions and policy considerations. Petersen and Short noted that these school board presidents largely identified their influence on the board and in the community as reflecting their relationship with the superintendent. A good relationship boded well for their sense of their influence, while a more troubled relationship triggered less security in terms of influence on the part of the board president. The researchers concluded that the relationship between the superintendent

and the school board, and especially the relationship with the school board president, may be more symbiotic than traditionally thought, as evidenced by reports of superintendent-board tensions.

School Board Culture

There is scant research devoted to the subject of school board organizational culture (Petersen & Williams, 2005b; Usdan, 2010), so one is left largely to extrapolate from somewhat related data as to how school boards fashion themselves and the types of considerations that may inform school board dynamics. The superintendents surveyed in the 2000 AASA study were asked to characterize their school boards by selecting one of the general descriptions provided in the survey (Glass et al., 2000). A small percentage of the superintendents reported that their school boards were "dominated by elite" with only 1.1% of superintendents in the largest districts (25,000 or more students) finding this to be the case. A slightly higher percentage of superintendents in the two middling-size district categories (between 3.1% and 2.7%) stated their school boards were dominated by an elite group, while 2% of the superintendents of the smallest district size (300 pupils or less) characterized their board this way.

Across all four categories of district size, the majority of superintendents characterized their school boards as "aligned with common interests" (ranging between 63% and 69% of the superintendents). The most pronounced difference, based on district size, was seen for superintendents overseeing districts of 25,000 students or more; here, 32.3% of the superintendents characterized their school board as "represents distinct faction." Superintendents of the three smaller district categories were much less likely to

characterize their school boards this way: 19.6% of superintendents of districts with 3,000 to 24,999 students, 18.7% of superintendents of districts with 300 to 2,999 students, and 13.9% of superintendents of districts with less than 300 students. This data correlated with the study's finding that community pressure groups had a greater influence in the largest school districts (Glass et al., 2000). In these districts, micromanagement efforts on the part of school boards may reflect genuine deep-seated socio-cultural conflicts over how resources are allocated and whether some groups within the district appear to be privileged and others disadvantaged through district decision-making (Hess, 2010).

Mizell (2010) described school boards as either "passive or reactive," and suggested that tensions between school boards and superintendents might reflect in part, a notion that school boards have "experienced increasing incursions on their authority and power" since the 1950s (Mizell, 2010, p. 20). This is an intriguing perspective as it almost mirrors the finding discussed elsewhere in this chapter that superintendents periodically report having their responsibilities and authorities encroached on by their school boards and that when this occurs, it may serve as a predictor of superintendents' intention to leave the district leadership. In his study applying dissatisfaction theory to superintendent and school board turnover, Alsbury (2008) noted that school board culture reflects the district community's culture and that dysfunctional community relations marked by conflict between factions or, conversely, reflecting a single and dominant perspective that overrides any dissent, will often be realized in the micro-community of the school board.

In an effort to research relationships between school district administrators and stakeholders—superintendents, school board presidents and members, teachers, parents, and other community members—Petersen and Williams (2005a) opted for a social capital theory approach. They interviewed three superintendents, seven school board presidents, two executive directors of the state school board association, and the executive director of the state administrator's association as to their impressions of how these key relationships were affected at districts throughout the state. They found that the superintendents tended to accord slightly greater social capital to board presidents and that, consequently, board presidents held slightly greater influence than other board members or community members. They similarly found that board presidents' perceptions of the superintendent tended to inform those held by other board members.

Petersen and Williams (2005a) concluded, based on their interviews, that school districts with higher levels of collaboration and cooperation imbued stakeholders with greater social capital and eased the work of superintendents and school boards because it had the effect of reducing adverse perceptions while encouraging greater involvement and sharing of responsibilities. They also observed that school board presidents who sought to increase the human capital of the superintendent by supporting them publicly and backing their work in the community and in the schools, recognized that this was critical to ensuring the superintendent could function effectively and not encounter undue obstacles in the course of his or her administration. Both the school board presidents and the superintendents interviewed underscored the critical element of trust in the relationship; when trust existed, challenges that arose for the district could be discussed

and addressed in ways that both the superintendent and the school board could accept and present to the community as a unified front.

An example of a superintendent and school board culture clash was presented by Fusarelli (2006), on the heels of a school decentralization bill that sought to establish a distributive leadership model in which local boards would have legal authority to make decisions in school matters. Fusarelli reported that once the redistributed leadership model was initiated the district, which had previously enjoyed long superintendent tenures and little conflict between school board and superintendents, it experienced significant instability in leadership. Once the initiative was passed, the district's long-term superintendent, with 16 years in the position, resigned on the basis that he believed he could not be effective under the redistributed leadership guidelines. His resignation, and the redistributed school leadership model, ushered in a period of great turnover and turmoil, with more than seven superintendents in 14 years passing through the district, while principal turnover also radically increased.

The alarming leadership turnover prompted the school district to take a chance on a non-educator to try to lead the district out of its leadership morass, and it hired a retired army colonel. As Fusarelli (2006) noted, tension between the new superintendent and the school board immediately arose. The school board itself was plagued by high turnover as the turmoil engendered by the leadership vacuum over almost 15 years placed tremendous strains on those trying to work in the system. There is evidence that with the insecurity in leadership, the district's board had moved in to fill the void, assuming responsibilities that did not necessarily fall under its purview (such as interviewing,

hiring, and firing sports coaches) and conducting closed meetings in violation of the Freedom of Information Act. The former army colonel, as superintendent, proceeded from a military-style culture, demanding significant personnel cuts when faced with a budget shortfall and chastising other school administrators and board members for reacting emotionally to that objective. This approach "conflicted with the cultural norms of the community" (Fusarelli, 2006, p. 47). This nontraditional superintendent's approach to school leadership, assuming a top-down hierarchical expectation, ran counter to the school board (and school staff's) expectations for the position and before long, the culture-clash resulted in this nontraditional superintendent being ousted. It also was inconsistent with the tenets of a distributed leadership model that initiated the initial changeover of superintendents in the district. There are some forceful arguments to be made for distributed leadership in terms of effecting workable relations between superintendents, school boards, and the range of potential stakeholders (Elmore, 2000); however, it would appear the school district in Fusarelli's case study greatly miss-stepped in introducing and implementing its conception of distributed leadership.

Fusarelli (2006) concluded the case study by seeming to place the onus on the superintendent to adapt to the school board and district culture: "Superintendents unwilling or unable to accurately read the organizational culture of the school system and surrounding community and unwilling to invest time cultivating relationships with key stakeholders are unable to lead because quite simply, no one will follow them" (Fusarelli, 2006, p. 49). The case described by Fusarelli illustrates an observation made by Usdan (2010) that school boards are often the only body that provides "continuous institutional

leadership through times of constant change and administrative churn" (p. 9). Another way to read these statements is to conclude that superintendents ignore the culture of their school board at their own peril.

Studies Examining the Superintendent's Relationship With the School Board

As part of their survey of a nationwide sample of 1,006 public school superintendents, Farkas et al. (2003) solicited the superintendents' thoughts on their relations with their school boards. The majority of superintendents (73%) reported that they spent a significant amount of their time training board members in how to "do their jobs appropriately;" 28% of the group strongly agreed with this statement, while just 6% strongly disagreed with it. On a potentially related note, 57% of superintendents agreed with the statement that their relations with their boards could "completely change overnight with an election." Interestingly, when asked whether the superintendents had to counter "micro-managing and one-issue partisanship" on the part of their boards, a slight majority (51%) stated that this was not a substantial issue for them, with the group evenly split between those for whom it was not a significant problem (26%) and those who regarded it as little to no problem at all (26%). The superintendents also seemed to find that their boards behaved civilly with 60% indicating they had no issues surrounding their school boards' levels of civility and another 18% reporting that there may be slight issues. However, almost 10% identified board incivility as a major issue for them. When Farkas et al. also asked the superintendents to select which statement best described their school boards, 76% chose "My board has a cooperative, professional spirit and has the best interests of the kids at heart," while 22% selected "There's too much dissension,

inexperience, and single-issue partisanship on my board," leaving 2% uncommitted (Farkas et al., 2003, pp. 69-70).

Kuncham's (2008) study of a population of Long Island school superintendents and their satisfaction with their school board relationships found a high rate of satisfaction. In fact, the researcher noted that his sample of superintendents reported a higher level of satisfaction with their school board relationships than superintendents in recent nationwide studies conducted by the AASA. The satisfaction findings remained consistent across superintendent demographics and differences in school district size and makeup. Comparing the data from this research with prior research studies, Kuncham determined that the Long Island superintendents' high level of job satisfaction appeared to be directly correlated with their positive reports of board relationships. Fale et al. (2009) in their report on the state of superintendency in New York State noted that 87% of New York superintendents rated their school boards as moderately or very effective, while just fewer than 10% stated their school boards were either somewhat or highly ineffective. As the researchers observed, "ineffective boards are inevitably an impediment" to the work of the superintendent (Fale et al., 2009, p. 11).

Glass et al.'s (2000) nationwide survey of superintendents indicated that their school boards favorably rated the majority of superintendents, with 69% receiving "excellent" evaluations and another 22% receiving "good" evaluations from their boards. However, when asked to evaluate their school boards, 30% of the superintendents reported that they worked with board members who were unqualified to carry out their board responsibilities. Further, the superintendents generally gave their school boards

lower ratings than they received from their school boards, suggesting an imbalanced dynamic in this critical relationship. While superintendents in the AASA study stated their boards were "qualified," they did not identify them as "well qualified" (Glass et al., 2000, p. 59).

Hall (2008) conducted a dissertation study examining the impact severe budgetary limitations might have on the relationship of school superintendents with their school boards in the 53 K-12 public school districts in Michigan's Upper Peninsula, a region particularly hard-hit by job loss, population attrition, depressed tax base, and limited resources. State budget guidelines and revenue shortfall combined to create a dire funding situation for Michigan schools. Per student spending was frozen below anticipated spending allocations during 2003, 2004, and 2005, and these freezes occurred during the school year so that districts were left struggling to adjust to significantly less funding than they had based their school budgets on at the start of the school year. Districts in the Upper Peninsula were particularly hard-hit by these shortfalls because they had fewer local and regional resources to draw on for additional revenue than did districts in better populated and more financially secure regions. Hall was curious to determine whether the severe financial challenges impacted superintendent and board relations and how superintendents negotiated this relationship during times of financial crisis. Twenty-nine (of 53) superintendents provided usable data and responses to the researcher's survey. Hall (2008) stated that the majority of these superintendents had worked as superintendents for a decade or less, and approximately 55% had worked in their school district prior to assuming the superintendency. The districts in Upper

Peninsula are relatively small with only three districts serving populations of 2,500 students or more, and only one of these enrolled more than 3,000 students. One of the respondents supervised a district of less than 100 students. Almost 80% of the superintendents responding to Hall's survey reported that their district had sustained a significant decline in revenues over the previous 5 years, while over 93% reported that their per pupil expenditures had increased during this period. Just fewer than 90% of the responding superintendents reported that their districts had drawn on their fund equity balances over the past 5 years in order to balance their budgets. The implication of this is that these districts had been performing under some financial duress for at least several years.

Hall (2008) solicited superintendent perceptions of their relationships with their school boards using a Likert-style instrument. Superintendents with over 6 years' experience were likeliest to report that their school boards had not become more intrusive in day-to-day management of the school system, while those with 5 or fewer years of experience were "more neutral" on this issue (Hall, 2008, p. 93). The researcher speculated that these superintendents had only experienced serious budgetary limitations for the duration of their tenure, so the recent conditions of Upper Peninsula's school districts were familiar to them. Additionally, Hall suggested that school boards may be more direct in their participation with newer superintendents and so these less tenured superintendents may also have only experienced more directly active school boards. Even more striking, the researcher suggested, was the finding that the vast majority of superintendents whose districts had drawn down on their fund equities reported very

collaborative relationships with their school boards; Hall stated this finding went against conventional theory that relations between superintendents and school boards would be more strained during difficult budgetary challenges. One explanation Hall proffered was that the superintendents and school boards had limited options and that the restricted range of choices allowed little room for arguments in favor of different approaches. Given this interpretation, once the available options were outlined and debate over recommendations were made, the plan for going forward was often evident and both superintendents and boards could join in getting behind and taking shared ownership of the allocation decisions and cost-cutting measures at which they had arrived. Hall concluded that the severe budgetary limitations encountered by the Upper Peninsula superintendents and their school boards did not compromise their relationships and that this held true regardless of length of superintendent tenure. Superintendents with longer tenure may have asserted greater control of day-to-day operations, but they also did not report feeling challenged by their school boards to relinquish their leadership.

Nelson (2010) reported on the results of a survey of 213 superintendents working in Minnesota public school districts, soliciting the superintendents' perceptions of their relationship with their school boards. The overwhelming number of superintendents (95%) reported good to very good relationships with their school boards. The superintendents were also asked to rate behaviors that they valued in their school board members. Nelson reported that two behaviors in particular were cited by superintendents as of greatest importance to them: "separating the board's policy role from the superintendents' administrative role" and "demonstrating service in the interests of all

students and the district while avoiding conflicting loyalties to special groups" (p. 6). The school board culture that was considered most advantageous by these Minnesota superintendents was one characterized by (a) clear boundaries delineated between the superintendent's administrative functions and the policy guidance of the school board, and (b) a non-politicized school board culture that prioritized educational delivery over other considerations.

Negative School Board Relationships as a Reason for Leaving

In an auto-ethnographic study reporting on his experience as a new superintendent in a small rural school district, Garza (2008) reported a rather dim view of his experience with school boards. The author contended that board members will "protect their power to maintain their influence," often to the detriment of students' needs (p. 163). Garza framed the experience of running afoul of the school board as the risk a superintendent takes when he or she prioritizes student education over the needs of board members. While Garza's article represents a limited perspective as a personal account, it is not unlikely that many superintendents who have experienced conflict with their school boards would similarly frame the situation as the superintendent championing the district's educational program in the face of obstructionist school board members proceeding from a nonprofessional and potentially partisan standpoint.

The flip-side of this perspective was provided by Eadie (2007) who described a case in which a school board hired a promising candidate for superintendent who had excellent educational and managerial skills, a strong record of performance, and who had, by all reports, maintained positive relationships with school boards in other districts in

which he worked. During the process the school board did not specifically inquire into the superintendent's views on governance and working with the board because, according to the evidence, this would not be an issue. During the second year of the superintendent's tenure, serious conflicts arose when, as Eadie phrased it, the "majority of board members grew committed to the board's becoming a higher-impact governing body that engaged its members more proactively and creatively in decision making" (Eadie, 2007, p. 43). The superintendent balked at the board's requirement that he lead them in becoming more involved, preferring to retain a "clear black-and-white division of labor between the board's ends-focused work and the staff's means-focused functions," according to Eadie (p. 43). While the exact nature of the superintendent's leaving this position was not clear—whether the superintendent left of his own accord or was fired by the board—what is obvious is that the superintendent lost the superintendency as a result of this conflict, existential in nature, with the board.

Since Eadie (2007) provides a narrative, unscientific account of the case, the report engenders an instinct to read between the lines. One of the interesting aspects of the report is the description of the school board as growing committed to becoming more proactive in decision-making. The suggestion of this phrasing is that after this superintendent had been hired and began working, a number of school board members initiated a change in what the superintendent had understood to be their working relationship when taking the position. It would appear that for the first year of the superintendent's tenure, the relationship was proceeding smoothly and the educational work of the district being accomplished. It is possible to infer that during the second year

of the superintendent's tenure a power struggle emerged, presumably arising from this new commitment on the part of a majority of the board members to be more involved in the decision-making process. This proclivity in itself is not inherently negative; in fact, there may be a number of benefits associated with greater board involvement (Hofman et al., 2002). However, what is left unexplored is the nature of the board's demand for involvement, that is, whether there were partisan motivations having little to do with educational delivery, and whether what the board was requiring of the superintendent was either appropriate or likely to improve educational delivery in the district. All that is evident is that the superintendent ultimately lost the power struggle and left or was removed from the position due to the struggles with the changing school board.

A study of 23 individuals who had left district superintendencies in Texas during the 1994-1995 school year (out of an overall population of 183 individuals leaving Texas superintendencies that year) was conducted by Czaja and Harman (1997). The researchers honed in on individuals still working within the Texas school system, some who had taken superintendent positions in other districts and some who assumed other jobs within the state's educational system. Of the 23 respondents, eight had taken new superintendencies as a result of either relocation for personal reasons or because the new superintendency offered more attractive conditions. The remaining 15 individuals reported they had left their superintendents' positions in 1995, at least in part, due to difficult working relationships with their school boards. A third of these respondents had been pushed out by their school boards under threat of termination or actual firing. Czaja and Harman cited statements made by some of these superintendents indicating clashes of

personality and culture, citing partisanship and power struggles, while others highlighted a lack of training for board members and frustration, as an experienced educator, of being dictated to by board members who were nonprofessionals in education.

Chapter Summary

There is clearly concern in some educational circles that high rates of superintendent retirement and turnover jeopardize effective governance of our nation's schools at an especially challenging time in our history (Natkin et al., 2002a; Shields, 2000; Winter et al., 2007). The American economy is struggling, unemployment rates are high, and school systems are charged with meeting strict accountability and performance standards in order to secure consistent funding. Even with funding, many school districts in recent years have struggled to balance budgets, and some have sustained serious cuts in programming and staffing (Farkas et al., 2003; Glass et al., 2000). High rates of superintendent turnover are believed to present a risk to consistency in educational service (Byrd et al., 2006; Eadie, 2007). Additionally, superintendent turnover incurs expenses in hiring and getting a new superintendent up to speed on district business, as well as monies lost in programs and initiatives that are embarked on under one administration and stalled or abandoned in the next (Natkin et al., 2002a; Petersen & Williams, 2005a; Sell, 2005). The interruptions in service and the lack of consistency may have an impact on educational excellence, although as Alsbury (2002, 2008) noted, the relationship is somewhat complicated when it comes to assessing the impact of superintendent turnover on student achievement.

Many of the researchers referenced in this review considered the possible link between school superintendent and school board relations and a superintendent's decision to leave the district (Byrd et al., 2006; Lowery et al., 2001; Petersen & Fusarelli, 2001). Despite the popularly-held view that most superintendent and school board relations are fraught with tension and power struggles, in fact a substantial amount of the research discussed in this chapter highlights very positive relationships between superintendents and school boards (Fale et al., 2009; Glass et al., 2000; Hess, 2010; Petersen & Short, 2001; Petersen & Williams, 2005a, 2005b). While there is some evidence that superintendents rate their boards' effectiveness as lower than the school boards rate their superintendents' effectiveness (Fale et al., 2009; Glass et al., 2000), by and large superintendents seem satisfied with their school board relationships.

The exceptions to this, the literature suggests, are in situations where the boundaries between the superintendent's work and the school board's operations are not clearly defined or are ignored or resisted (Garza, 2008; Glass et al., 2000; Sell, 2005). When a superintendent comes to feel that the school board is intrusive, especially in areas under the superintendent's purview or the superintendent perceives the school board is attempting to obtain control of district functions—particularly in the realm of instructional decision-making and leadership—the struggle for power can produce serious problems (Ahlman, 1986; Byrd, et al., 2006; Glass et al., 2000; It's not the board's role..., 2000). The instances of superintendent turnover attributed to negative school board relations reviewed in this chapter all illustrate a variant of this dynamic (Czaja & Harman, 1997; Eadie, 2007; Garza, 2008; Hofman et al., 2002).

Some of the research suggests that the potential for this type of power struggle may be most likely in small, rural school districts where the dynamics of power and decision-making can be intensified by petty concerns, vocal factions, and a resistance to change (Duffy, 1993; Natkin et al., 2002a; Wolverton, 2004). Alaska's superintendents and school boards provide a unique opportunity to consider the potential for this dynamic since the majority of the state's districts are rural, small, and largely isolated in terms of demographics and geography (Barnhardt, 2001; Jones & Ongtooguk, 2002). Alaska has also sustained a relatively high rate of superintendent turnover in recent decades and this begs the question of whether Alaska school districts are prone to the tensions between superintendents and school boards that are a key predictor of superintendent intention to leave the position (Ahlman, 1986; Wolverton, 2004). If so, it may indicate that a certain type of school board culture is especially predictive of superintendent turnover. It is the purpose of this study to explore this question and contribute to a greater understanding of what factors contribute to superintendent turnover.

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this study was to quantify Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job and to determine if their intention to quit their job was correlated to the organizational culture of the school district governing board they worked with. To date there has been very little research conducted on the subject of superintendent turnover rates in the State of Alaska. Alaska is a very diverse state with a variety of large school districts, small school districts, and single-site school districts. The Alaskan superintendents who serve in these districts are very unique individuals who face many extraordinary social, cultural, geographical, climatic, and organizational challenges.

The instruments utilized in this study were the Anticipated Turnover Scale, to determine superintendent's intention to quit their job, and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument, to diagnose the organizational culture of school district governing boards as perceived by Alaskan superintendents. Both instruments were administered as questionnaires utilizing the electronic data collection tool, Survey Monkey. The intention of this study was to provide meaningful and valuable information to the State of Alaska, Alaskan School Boards, and Alaskan superintendents. After thoroughly reviewing the literature, it was concluded that there has never been a study of this nature conducted within the State of Alaska. In addition, the review of literature revealed no studies on superintendent turnover and the possible correlation to school board cultures that have been conducted utilizing the instruments found in this study. The research conducted for this study has the potential to provide meaningful information for the State of Alaska, which addresses a specific sector of school administration not yet

studied, and meaningful information to districts throughout the United States, due to the fact that there are very few studies similar in nature that have ever been conducted in the United States.

Alaska has 54 school districts including one state-run school. There is one superintendent and one governing board for each of these districts. For the purpose of this study, the population and sample identified was all superintendents in the State of Alaska. The study attempted to survey all active superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year.

Theoretical Framework

The philosophical worldview of the researcher is closely aligned with the postpositivist view. Postpositivists, according to Creswell (2009), hold a deterministic philosophy in which causes probably determine effects or outcomes. Thus, the problems studied by postpositivists reflect the need to identify and assess the causes that influence outcomes. It is also reductionistic in that the intent is to reduce ideas into small discrete set of ideas to test, such as the variables that comprise hypotheses and research questions. The knowledge that develops through a postpositivists lens is based on careful observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists in the world. Thus, developing numeric measures of observations and studying the behavior of individuals becomes paramount for a postpositivist. Finally, there are laws or theories that govern the world, and these need to be tested or verified and refined so that we can understand the world. Thus, in the scientific method, the accepted approach to research by postpostivists, an individual begins with a theory, collects data that either supports or

refutes the theory, and then makes necessary revisions before final tests are made. The postpositivist worldview represents the thinking after positivism. This view includes a position of challenging the traditional notion of the absolute truth of knowledge and recognizing that we cannot be "positive" about our claims of knowledge when studying the behavior and actions of humans (Creswell, 2009). This worldview reflects the views of the researcher given the relationship and understanding of the roles of the superintendent and school boards for this study.

Study Design

A quantitative correlational study design was used to address the purpose of the study. The research questions call for the identification of factors that influence an outcome, which lends itself to a quantitative approach. The strategies of inquiry utilized in this research were quantitative strategies, specifically survey research. The survey research provided numeric descriptions indicating to what extent, if any, the organizational culture of school boards was correlated to the turnover rates of superintendents in the State of Alaska. A survey type questionnaire was the method of collecting data for the study.

Background

School district superintendents play an important role in the success of the education system. Superintendents may introduce changes to school districts that take years to materialize. Without the continued leadership and vision of the superintendent for the duration of the change, the initiative may fail. Therefore, a high turnover rate among superintendents could jeopardize the quality of the education system.

There is a large body of research surrounding employee retention. A number of factors have been found to be correlated with intention to quit, including job satisfaction, organizational culture, and leadership style of organizational leaders. In addition to these factors, Alaskan superintendents face many extraordinary social, cultural, geographical, climatic, and organizational challenges that could influence their intention to quit the job.

Furthermore, in order for superintendents to be successful in the job, they must work effectively with the school district's governing board. The governing board has the ultimate authority to support or oppose any proposal made by the superintendent. School district governing boards operate within the context of a certain organizational culture. The type of organizational culture may vary from one district to another. Superintendents may not fit well within a given organizational culture, which could produce an impediment to effective interaction between the superintendent and the governing board. If superintendents are unable to gain the support of the school board for their initiatives, this may lower their job satisfaction, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will quit their job.

While a high turnover rate among superintendents in the State of Alaska is apparent to many who work in the education system in Alaska, there is surprisingly little documentation on the high turnover rate. Furthermore, no studies to date have attempted to establish whether or not there is a correlation between superintendent's intention to quit and the organizational culture of the school district governing board.

Problem Statement

The general problem is that there is a high turnover rate of superintendents in the State of Alaska. The high turnover rate can have detrimental consequences to the education system. The specific problem is that no studies have been published to report on the likelihood that superintendents in the State of Alaska will leave their job. In addition, no studies have been published to show whether or not Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job is correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board. Without this information, stakeholders such as superintendents, governing board members, educational researchers, and the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development may not have all the information they need to maximize the health of the Alaskan education system.

Population and Sample

The population for the study was all active school district superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year. The sample consisted of all active school district superintendents in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 school year who sign informed consent forms and completed the survey.

Instrumentation

Anticipated Turnover Scale. The purpose of the Anticipated Turnover Scale is to index an employee's perception or opinion of the possibility of voluntarily terminating his or her present job (see Appendices). The questionnaire consists of 12 items in Likert-format with seven response options ranging between agree strongly to disagree strongly. The Anticipated Turnover Scale is reverse-scored, so that a lower score reflects a higher

intent to remain in the position whereas a higher score suggests intent to leave. Representative questions on the scale include "I am quite sure I will leave my position in the foreseeable future" and "Deciding to stay or leave my position is not a critical issue for me at this point in time."

The Anticipated Turnover Scale was originally developed by Hinshaw and Atwood (1979) and was tested several times. Internal consistency reliability was estimated with coefficient alpha; standardized alpha -.84. Construct validity was estimated using principal components factor analysis and predictive modeling techniques. Two factors were identified which explained 54.9% of the variance. In addition, since the instrument was first developed in 1978, a number of other researchers have used the instrument and have reported good validity and reliability.

Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (see Appendix B) was created to diagnose an organization's culture. It was originally designed by Cameron and Quinn (2006). It has been used in more than 1000 organizations and has been found to be very useful and accurate in diagnosing important aspects of an organization's underlying culture. The instrument consists of six categories: dominant characteristics, organizational leadership, management of employees, organization glue, strategic emphases, and criteria of success. Each category contains four descriptors, and each descriptor corresponds to one of the four organizational types identified by Cameron and Quinn. Respondents are told they have 100 points to assign value within each category across the descriptors so that the descriptor that best represents the organizational culture the respondent is working within

receives the greatest percentage of points, while lesser point percentages are assigned to the remaining three descriptors in that category. It may be that percentages are fairly evenly distributed within a category, indicating the respondent perceives that several or all of the descriptors apply equally to the organizational culture. A representative example taken from the *organization glue* category, for instance, is the clan culture descriptor that "the glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust; commitment to this organization runs high," whereas the market culture descriptor for this category is "the glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment; aggressiveness and winning are common themes."

The instrument has been used by many different researchers in many different types of organizations, and all of the studies have tested the reliability and validity of the instrument. One study that tested the reliability of this instrument was conducted by Quinn and Spreitzer (1991) in which 796 executives from 86 different public utility firms diagnosed their firm's organizational culture. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were computed for each organizational culture being assessed by the instrument and each coefficient was statistically significant. Coefficients were .74 for clan culture, .79 for adhocracy culture, .73 for hierarchy culture, and .71 for market culture. In addition, Zammuto and Krakower used this instrument to investigate the culture of higher education intuitions (as cited in Cameron & Quinn, 2006). More than 1300 respondents rated the culture of their organizations, resulting in reliability coefficients of .82 for clan reliability, .83 for adhocracy reliability, .78 for market reliability, and .67 for hierarchy

reliability. In every published use, the instrument reliability of the culture types has demonstrated patterns consistent with those listed above. There is evidence of validity for the instrument as well in Cameron and Freeman's study of 334 institutions of higher education. This sample of organizations was representative of the entire population of 4-year colleges and universities in the United States. The validity study produced results that were highly consistent with the espoused values and organizational attributes, which then produced strong evidence for concurrent validity. In yet another study there was evidence found to support convergent validity and discriminant validity (as cited in (Cameron & Quinn, 2006).

The instrument consists of six items, and each item has four alternates. There are 100 points that are divided among the four alternates depending on the extent to which a particular alternate represents the organizational culture of the individual completing the instrument. More points are assigned to alternates that best represent the organizational culture of the individual completing the instrument. These four alternates were the independent variables.

Clan culture (CC). This variable was measured on a continuous measurement scale with a range of 0 to 100. The score was derived by calculating the average of questions 1a, 2a, 3a, 4a, 5a, and 6a from the OCAI questionnaire. Smaller scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits less of a clan culture while larger scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits more of a clan culture.

Adhocracy culture (AC). This variable was measured on a continuous measurement scale with a range of 0 to 100. The score was derived by calculating the average of questions 1b, 2b, 3b, 4b, 5b, and 6b from the OCAI questionnaire. Smaller scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits less of an adhocracy culture while larger scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits more of an adhocracy culture.

Market culture (MC). This variable was measured on a continuous measurement scale with a range of 0 to 100. The score was derived by calculating the average of questions 1c, 2c, 3c, 4c, 5c and 6c from the OCAI questionnaire. Smaller scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits less of a market culture while larger scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits more of a market culture.

Hierarchy culture (HC). This variable was measured on a continuous measurement scale with a range of 0 to 100. The score was derived by calculating the average of questions 1d, 2d, 3d, 4d, 5d, and 6d from the OCAI questionnaire. Smaller scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits less of a hierarchy culture while larger scores indicate a perception that the school district governing board exhibits more of a hierarchy culture.

Anticipated Turnover Scale (AT). The score for this scale served as the dependent variable. This variable was measured on a continuous measurement scale with a range of 1 to 7. The score was derived by calculating the average of questions 1 through 12 from the Anticipated Turnover Scale questionnaire. Questions 2, 4, 5, 7, 11,

and 12 were reversed coded prior to calculating the score. Smaller scores indicate less intention to leave the job while larger scores indicate greater intention to leave the job.

Research Questions

The overarching research question was what, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the perceived organizational culture of the school district governing board, among school superintendents in the State of Alaska? The following specific research questions were addressed:

1. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a clan culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
2. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have an adhocracy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
3. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a hierarchy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
4. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a market culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
5. Do clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting the anticipated turnover of school superintendents in the State of Alaska?

Research Hypotheses

Related to the research questions are several hypotheses for the present study.

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).

Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 is as follows:

H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).

H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 is as follows:

H_0: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) do not add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).

H_a: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).

Data Analysis

All statistical analyses were performed using PASW (formerly SPSS) for Windows (PASW 18.0, SPSS Inc., Chicago, IL). All of the analyses were two-sided with a 5% alpha level. Demographic variables were summarized using (a) the mean, standard deviation, and range for continuous scaled variables and frequency and (b) percent for categorical scaled variables. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal consistency reliability of the organizational culture and anticipated turnover scale scores.

Hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient. If the Pearson correlation coefficient was statistically significantly different than zero, then the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that there was a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a culture consistent with that variable (CC, AC, MC, or HC). The strength and direction of the relationship between AT (dependent variable) and CC, AC, MC, and HC (independent variables) was reported and interpreted.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using stepwise multiple linear regression analysis. The dependent variable in the regression model was the anticipated turnover (AT) score. The independent variables were clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture

(MC), and hierarchy culture (HC). All four independent variables were entered into the stepwise model selection procedure. If the regression coefficients for two or more independent variables were statistically significant, then the null hypothesis was rejected and it was concluded that combinations of organizational cultures add independent information in predicting the anticipated turnover score. If one or fewer independent variables were statistically significant, it was concluded that combinations of organizational cultures do not add independent information in predicting the anticipated turnover score. The equation of the model was reported and statistically significant regression coefficients were interpreted. The *R*-square for the final model was also presented and interpreted.

Sample Size Justification

The power calculations were performed using the PASS 2008 software (Hintze, 2008). There are a total of 54 superintendents in the State of Alaska. Three were eliminated from the study due to the fact that the researcher is one of those superintendents, one district did not have an official superintendent during the time period being studied, and one school district is a state run school district which does not have a traditional governing school board from which to gather the OCAI information. Of the remaining 51 superintendents, 47 (92%) completed the entire survey. Thus, the final sample size for the study was 47.

Hypotheses 1 through 4. Hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient. According to Cohen (1988), small, medium and large effect sizes for hypothesis tests about the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) are: $r = 0.1$, $r = 0.3$ and r

= 0.5 respectively. A sample size of 47 produces 80% power to detect an effect size of 0.38, which is a medium effect size. For example, if the true population correlation between AT and CC was 0.38 or greater, this study had an 80% chance of detecting (i.e., achieving statistical significance) this correlation at the 0.05 level of statistical significance.

Hypothesis 5 was tested using multiple linear regression analysis. Power analysis for multiple linear regression is based on the amount of change in *R*-squared attributed to the variables of interest. According to Cohen (1988), small, medium, and large effect sizes for hypothesis tests about *R*-squared are: *R*-squared = 0.0196, *R*-squared = 0.13 and *R*-squared = 0.26 respectively. A sample size of 47 achieves 80% power to detect an *R*-Squared of 0.21 (which is a medium to large effect size) attributed to four independent variables (CC, AC, MC, and HC) using an *F* test with a significance level (alpha) of 0.05. Thus, a sample size of 47 is justifiable for detecting medium to large effect sizes for hypotheses 1 through 5.

Chapter 4: Results of the Study

Demographic Description

There were a total of 54 superintendents in the State of Alaska. Of these, 47 completed the entire survey. Thus, the final sample size for the study was 47, as detailed in Chapter 3. There were 13 (27.7%) study participants that were a superintendent in another state prior to becoming a superintendent in the State of Alaska. Of the 47 superintendents, 34 (72.3%) had worked as an administrator in the State of Alaska prior to becoming a superintendent in the State of Alaska. The average (and standard deviation) number of years of experience as a superintendent in the State of Alaska was 5.2 (4.2) and the range was 1 to 20. The average (and standard deviation) number of years of experience as a superintendent in their current district was 3.7 (2.6) and the range was 1 to 12. See Appendix A for detailed frequency tables and descriptive statistics for all of the survey questions.

Descriptive Statistics for the Independent and Dependent Variables

Table 1 shows descriptive statistics for the organizational culture and anticipated turnover scores. Considering that the smallest possible score for the anticipated turnover score was 1.00 and the maximum possible score was 7.00, the anticipated turnover score was slightly below the middle score of 4.0 on average, with a range of 1.33 to 6.08. Considering that the smallest possible score for the organizational culture measures was 0 and the maximum possible score was 100, all four of the organizational culture scores were rated relatively low on average, with averages ranging from 19.75 to 37.18. Among

the four types of organizational culture, clan culture was rated the highest on average, whereas the market culture was rated the lowest on average.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for the Anticipated Turnover and Organizational Culture Scores

	N					
	Valid	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Anticipated Turnover scale	47	0	3.4060	1.42767	1.33	6.08
Clan Culture	47	0	37.1809	15.89951	10.00	79.17
Adhocracy Culture	47	0	20.1631	9.25018	5.00	56.67
Market Culture	47	0	19.7482	9.97859	1.67	65.83
Hierarchy Culture	47	0	22.9078	11.70799	4.17	47.50

Cronbach's Alpha for the Independent and Dependent Variables

Cronbach's alpha was calculated for the organizational culture and anticipated turnover scores using the full study sample ($N = 47$). Table 2 shows that all of the scores had an alpha above .79, indicating good reliability.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability for the Independent and Dependent Variables

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha ($N = 47$)	Number of Items
Clan culture	0.86	6
Adhocracy culture	0.84	6
Market culture	0.79	6
Hierarchy culture	0.85	6
Anticipated turnover	0.87	12

Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1 was stated as follows:

- H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).
- H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture (CC).

Figure 2 is a scatter plot that graphically depicts the relationship between the anticipated turnover score and the clan culture score. The figure gives no evidence of a correlation between the two variables.

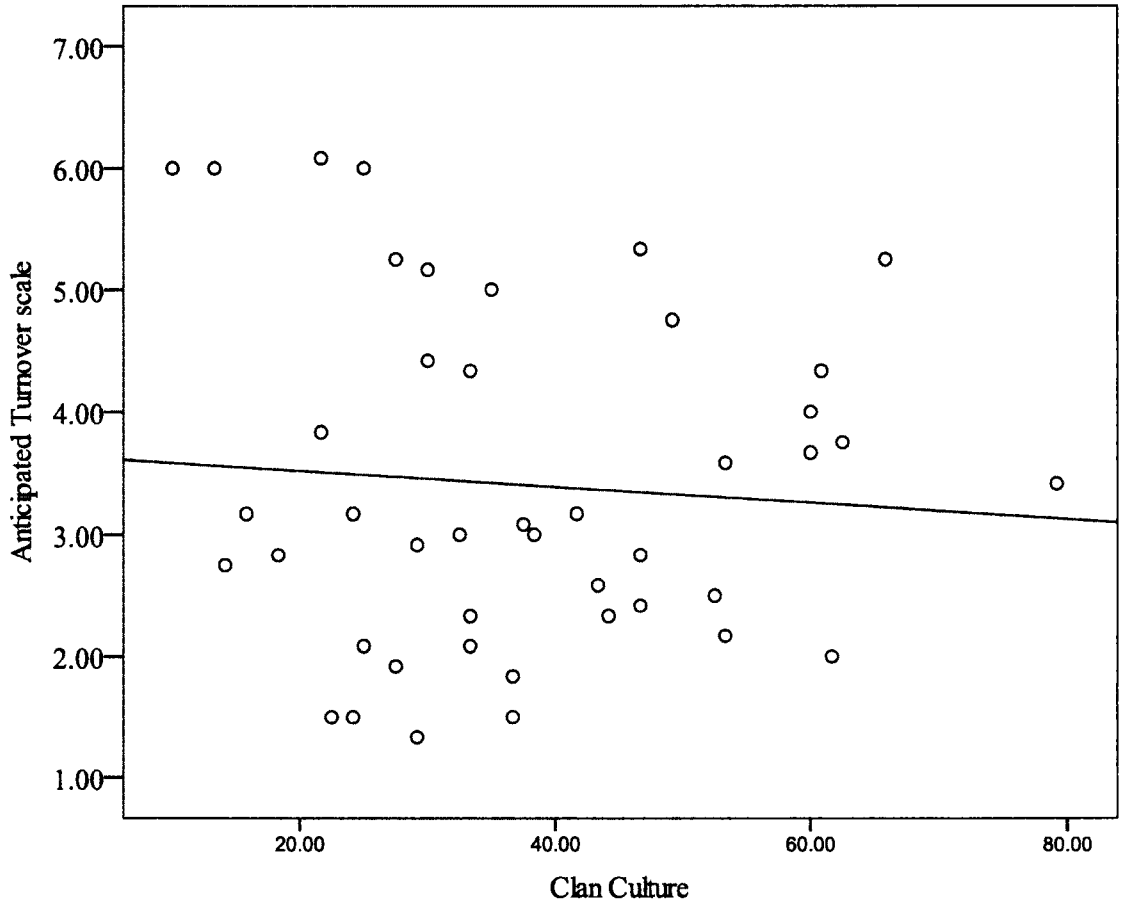

Figure 2. Scatter plot of the anticipated turnover score versus the clan culture score.

Table 3 shows there was not a statistically significant correlation between the anticipated turnover score and the clan culture score, $r(47) = -.073, p = .63$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and it was concluded that there is no correlation between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board has a clan culture.

Table 3

Pearson's Correlation Statistic for Anticipated Turnover Versus Clan Culture

		Clan Culture
Anticipated turnover scale	Pearson Correlation	-.073
	p-value	.628
	N	47

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2 was stated as follows:

- H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).
- H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture (AC).

Figure 3 is a scatter plot that graphically depicts the relationship between the anticipated turnover score and the adhocracy culture score. The figure gives no evidence of a correlation between the two variables.

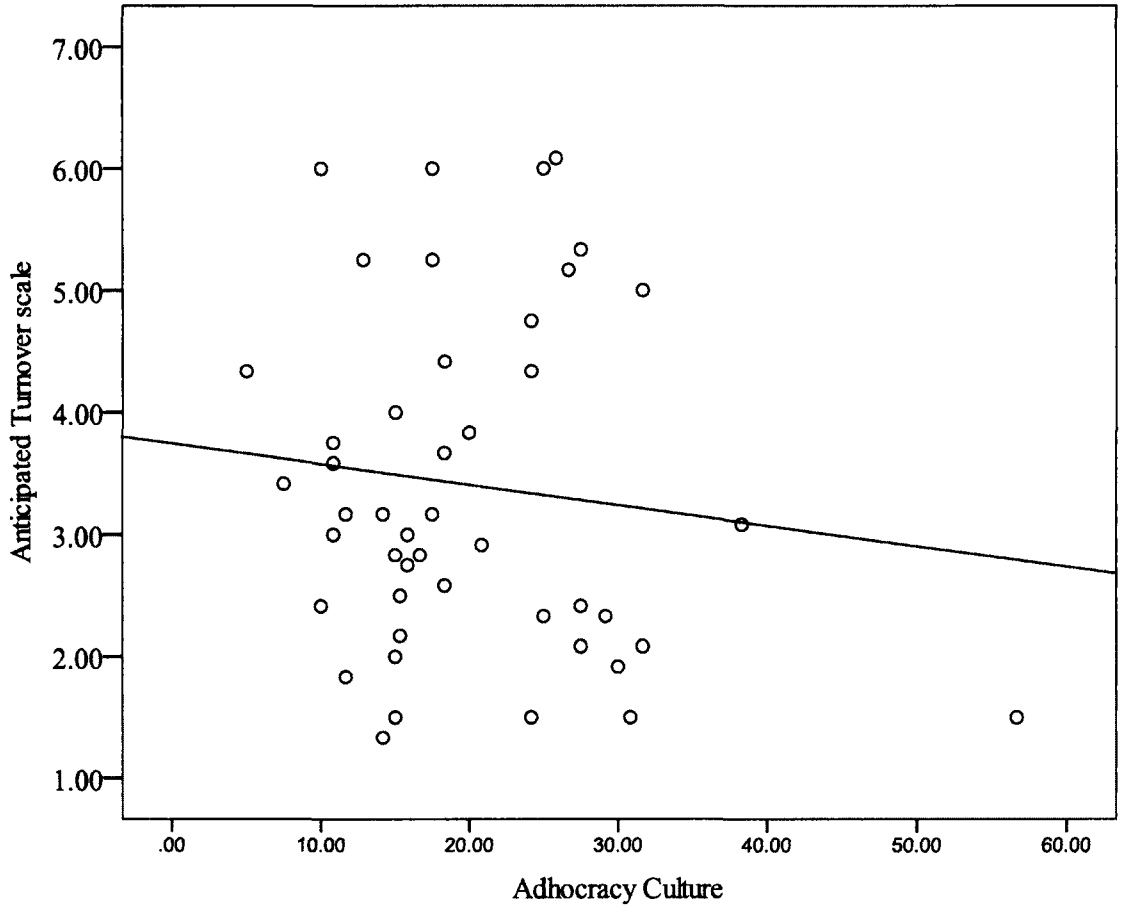

Figure 3. Scatter plot of the anticipated turnover score versus the adhocracy culture score.

Table 4 shows there was not a statistically significant correlation between the anticipated turnover score and the adhocracy culture score, $r(47) = -.11, p = .47$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected and it was concluded that there is no correlation between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board has an adhocracy culture.

Table 4

Pearson's Correlation Statistic for Anticipated Turnover Versus Adhocracy Culture

		Adhocracy Culture
Anticipated Turnover scale	Pearson Correlation	-.109
	p-value	.467
	N	47

Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 3 was stated as follows:

- H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).
- H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture (MC).

Figure 4 is a scatter plot that graphically depicts the relationship between the anticipated turnover score and the market culture score. The figure gives no evidence of a correlation between the two variables.

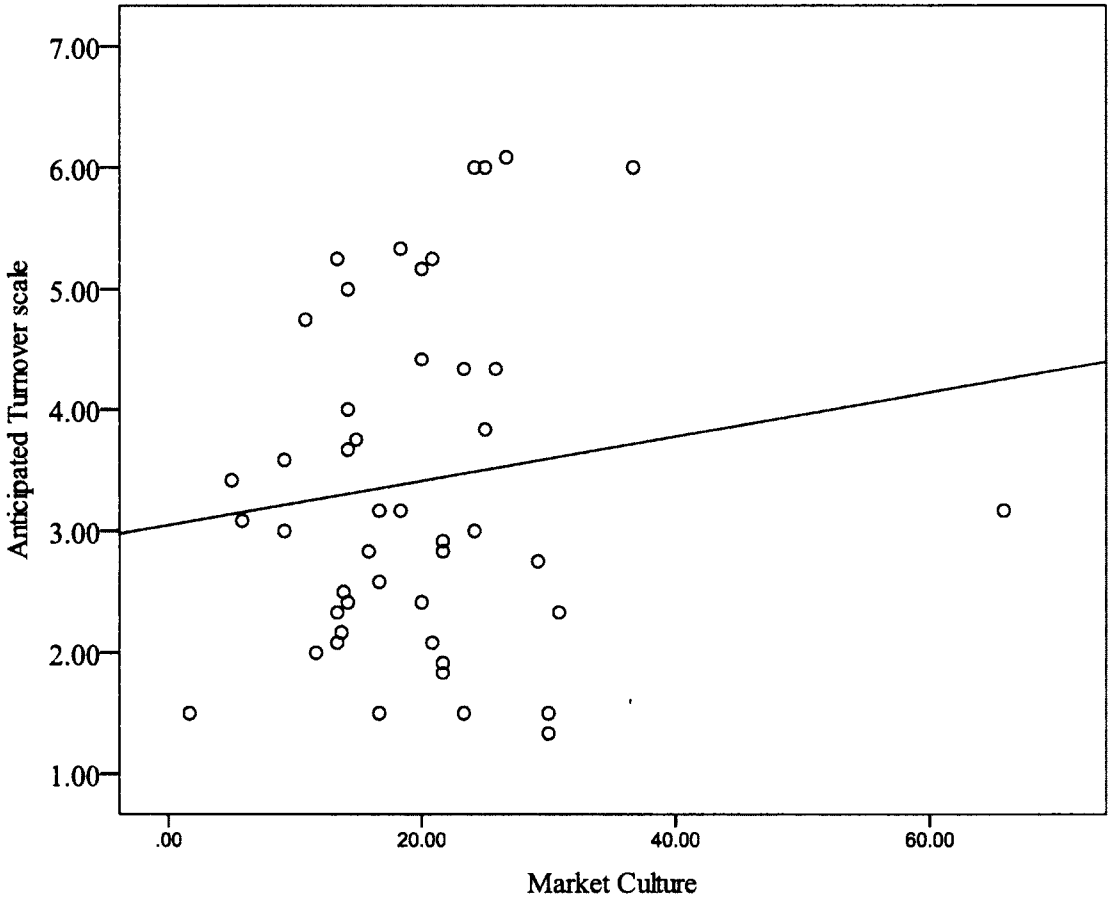

Figure 4. Scatter plot of the anticipated turnover score versus the market culture score.

Table 5 shows there was not a statistically significant correlation between the anticipated turnover score and the market culture score, $r(47) = .13, p = .40$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and it was concluded that there is no correlation between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board has a market culture.

Table 5

Pearson's Correlation Statistic for Anticipated Turnover Versus Market Culture

		Market Culture
Anticipated turnover scale	Pearson Correlation	.127
	p-value	.396
	N	47

Hypothesis 4. Hypothesis 4 was stated as follows:

- H_0: There is no correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).
- H_a: There is a correlation between anticipated turnover (AT) and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture (HC).

Figure 5 is a scatter plot that graphically depicts the relationship between the anticipated turnover score and the hierarchy culture score. The figure gives no evidence of a correlation between the two variables.

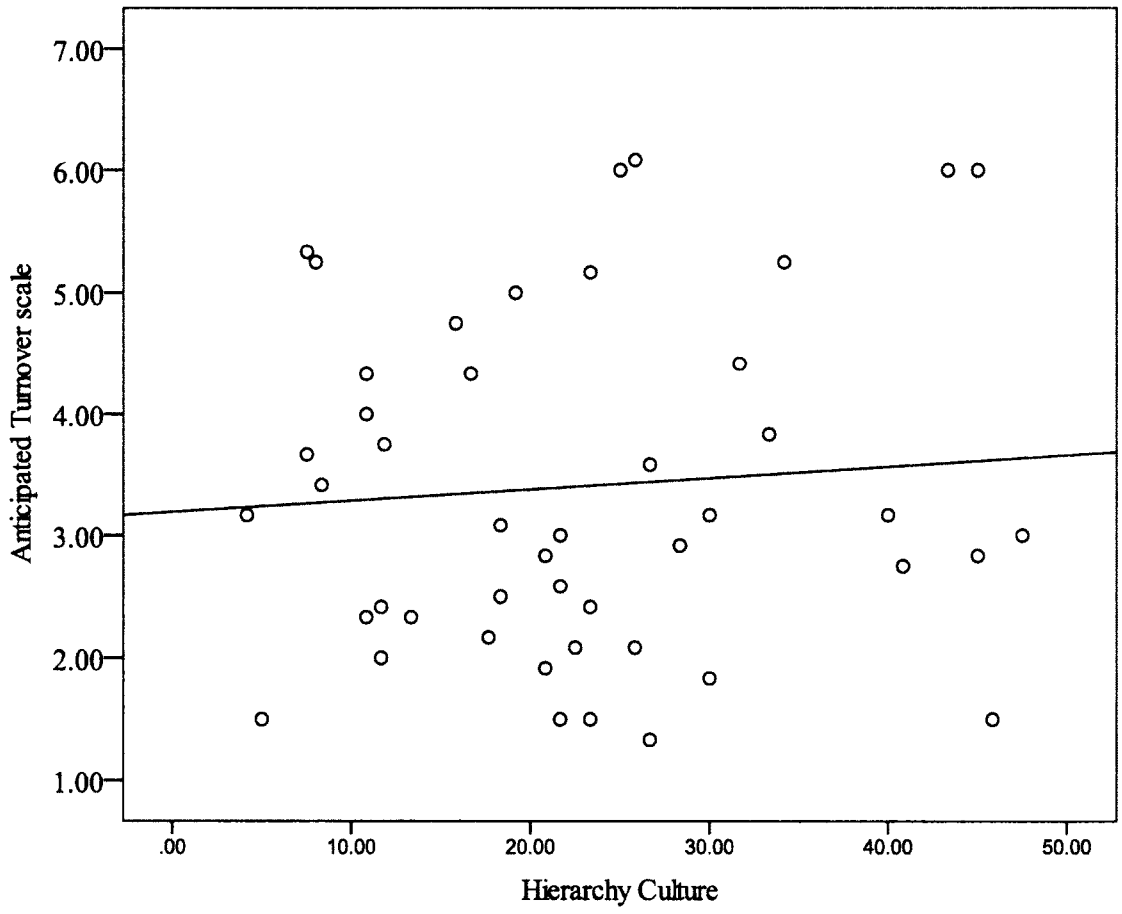

Figure 5. Scatter plot of the anticipated turnover score versus the hierarchy culture score.

Table 6 shows there was not a statistically significant correlation between the anticipated turnover score and the hierarchy culture score, $r(47) = .076, p = .61$. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected and it was concluded that there is no correlation between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board has a hierarchy culture.

Table 6

Pearson's Correlation Statistic for Anticipated Turnover Versus Hierarchy Culture

		Hierarchy Culture
Anticipated Turnover scale	Pearson Correlation	.076
	p-value	.610
	N	47

Hypothesis 5. Hypothesis 5 was stated as follows:

- H_0: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) do not add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).
- H_a: Clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (AT).

A stepwise multiple linear regression analysis was performed to test hypothesis 5. The dependent variable was the anticipated turnover score. The independent variables entered into the stepwise model selection procedure were the clan, adhocracy, market, and

hierarchy culture scores. The stepwise procedure selects the independent variable with the smallest *p*-value and if that *p*-value is less than .05, the variable is entered into the model. Then, the procedure attempts to enter each of the remaining independent variables into the model, one at a time. The independent variable with the next smallest *p*-value is added to the model, if the *p*-value is less than .05. The procedure continues in this fashion until either all of the independent variables have been entered into the model, or none of the remaining independent variables have *p*-values less than .05. The stepwise procedure failed to enter any of the variables into the model. This was to be expected, given that hypotheses 1 through 4 showed that none of the independent variables were statistically significantly associated with anticipated turnover. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected, and it was concluded that clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy culture do not add significant independent information in predicting anticipated turnover.

Chapter 5: Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The state of the superintendency in American public schools continues to be a topic of significant concern as the number of qualified and interested candidates prepared to enter the field is not keeping pace with the rate of retirements and superintendent attrition. School districts are losing capable and experienced leaders at a particularly pressing moment in our nation's life. Growing resource limitations, economic unease, and continuing changes in demographics—to name but several trends likely to continue for years to come—are having a demonstrable impact on the way school programming is funded and executed. Educational initiatives designed to ensure equitable service to all students and entailing considerations across a range of behavioral, developmental, physical, limited English proficient, and special needs categories, create distinct challenges for financially strapped school districts. The educational accountability requirements of NCLB and other similar policies have resulted in many districts focusing on high stakes testing that can potentially impact system funding. Thus the environment for realizing inspired educational leadership is fraught with difficulty and often requires hard decisions.

Given the challenges of the profession, including the various roles the superintendent may need to assume during tenure in a district, the value of support and collegial working relationships would appear to be essential to effective leadership. The superintendent deals with numerous stakeholders in the school system including, but not limited to, students, parents, teachers, administrative staff, community members, community leaders, and members of the school board. The members of the school board

generally constitute the stakeholder group that the superintendent most immediately must answer to, and this places their relationship with the superintendent at a distinctly different level than relationships with other stakeholders. Certainly the superintendent must remain responsive to the other stakeholders, but it is the school board that has the ultimate authority with regards to funding issues, policy development, and most importantly to this discussion, its responsibility for hiring and firing the district superintendent.

The purpose of this study was to determine whether school board dynamics play a predictive role in superintendents' intention to quit their jobs, by considering a specific population of superintendents that have shown turnover rates higher than the national average. Specifically, this study examined the perceptions of school superintendents employed in public school districts in the State of Alaska during the 2010-2011 academic year, as to the organizational culture exhibited by their individual school boards. These perceptions were correlated with the superintendents' intention to leave or remain at their superintendency in the foreseeable future. Cameron and Quinn's (2006) model of organizational culture served as the basis for this inquiry, and the overarching research question guiding the study was this: What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the perceived organizational culture of the school district governing board, among school superintendents in the State of Alaska? To that end, the study sought to determine what, if any relationship existed between anticipated turnover and the perceived organizational culture. The study also sought to determine the extent to which the school board is perceived to have a clan culture, adhocracy culture,

hierarchy culture, and/or market culture, among school superintendents in Alaska. The final question investigated was whether any of these four organizational cultures—clan, adhocracy, market, or hierarchy—added independent information in terms of predicting the anticipated turnover of school superintendents in the State of Alaska.

Study Summary

Chapter 1 described the problem that was being studied and the research question, which was whether school board culture played a part in impacting superintendents' decisions to quit their jobs. The recent literature relevant to the issues of this problem was broadly outlined with some background on Alaska's unique school situation. Chapter 2 provided a much more in-depth consideration of the literature focusing on school and educational service problems that have been associated with superintendent turnover. The particular challenges of educational delivery in Alaska were discussed, as it is a state with a relatively small population that is widely dispersed across a large geographical area subject to periodically harsh physical and climatic conditions. Research on the various roles superintendents may take on in their efforts to realize successful leadership was presented. Chapter 2 also explored the research on superintendent turnover to highlight factors predictive of turnover, and this pool of literature indicated that a compelling factor in superintendent attrition was poor relations with the school board. There is a relatively limited amount of research specifically exploring school board and superintendent relations, and even less considering the effects of school board culture on superintendents' job satisfaction or intention to remain on the job. Chapter 3 provided a description of the methodology for this study and outlined how

the data was collected from the subjects and analyzed to satisfy the quantitative correlational design. Chapter 4 presented the data collected and the analysis of the data. Chapter 5 opened with a summary of the study, followed with conclusions related to the findings, and offered recommendations for future research.

The following research questions guided this investigation:

1. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a clan culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
2. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have an adhocracy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
3. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a hierarchy culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
4. What, if any, relationship is there between anticipated turnover and the extent to which the school district governing board is perceived to have a market culture by school superintendents in the State of Alaska?
5. Do clan culture (CC), adhocracy culture (AC), market culture (MC), and hierarchy culture (HC) add independent information in predicting the anticipated turnover of school superintendents in the State of Alaska?

The two instruments employed in this research were the Anticipated Turnover Scale and the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. Both instruments were

distributed and administered to the subjects online through Survey Monkey, an electronic data collection tool. The Anticipated Turnover Scale, developed by Hinshaw and Atwood (1979), was selected to identify the subjects' opinion about the possibility of voluntarily leaving their current position. The 12-item Likert-type scale utilizing seven possible responses has been shown to demonstrate construct validity and internal consistency and research has indicated that it has good reliability across occupations. The Anticipated Turnover Scale captured the data for the dependent variable of intention to quit the superintendency at a particular district. The second measure used was the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. This measurement has also shown high validity, reliability, and internal consistency across a range of organizations. The instrument measures the degree to which an organization can be described as having a clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, and/or hierarchy culture.

Findings Summary

Population. Forty seven out of a possible 54 total superintendents working in Alaskan school districts in the 2010-2011 school year participated in this study by returning signed informed consent forms and completing the online survey. Of this population of 47 active superintendents, 72.3% (34 subjects) had worked in an administrative capacity within the Alaskan educational system prior to becoming a superintendent in the state. These superintendents ranged in years of experience on the job of superintendent between 1 year and 20 years, with the average of 5.2 years in the position (4.2 years was the standard deviation). In their current district superintendency, the longest tenure seen was 12 years, while the briefest was 1 year, and the average

number of years reflected in the current position was 3.7 years (with a standard deviation of 2.6 years).

Data analysis. Hypotheses 1 through 4 were tested using Pearson's correlation coefficient in order to determine the relationship, if any, between the independent variable of culture type, and the dependent variable of anticipated turnover intention. It was determined that given the population sample size, a correlation of 0.38 or greater would provide an 80% chance of detecting statistical significance at the 0.05 level. Hypothesis 5 was tested using stepwise multiple linear regressions analysis in order to determine variations in interactions. For this size population sample, there is the ability to achieve 80% power to detect an *R*-squared of 0.21 attributed to the four independent variables of culture (clan, adhocracy, market, and hierarchy), employing an *F* test with a 0.05 significance level (alpha). Thus, it was determined that this sample size allowed for the detection of a medium to large effect for all five hypotheses.

Results. In terms of the dependent variable, intention to leave the current job, the superintendents on average reported a slightly below-middle score of 3.41 out of a possible 7.00 maximum score and a possible 1.00 minimum score. The responses ranged from 1.33 to a high of 6.08. Overall, many of the superintendents did not report a strong intention to leave their superintendency. On the independent variables of organizational culture type, the superintendents were also in the low to average range in ratings across the cultures from a low of 19.75 to a high of 37.18. Clan culture proved to be the most prevalent at 37.18, while hierarchy (22.91), adhocracy (20.16), and market (19.75) organizational culture descriptors were similar in their levels of appearance. The

Cronbach's alpha for independent and dependent variables showed good reliability at alpha's ranging from 0.87 for anticipated turnover and 0.86 for clan culture to a low alpha of 0.79 for market culture, which was still quite high.

The results indicated that there was no significant correlation between anticipated turnover and clan culture (Hypothesis 1), thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. The results further indicated that there was no significant correlation between anticipated turnover and an adhocracy culture (Hypothesis 2), thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. Similarly, there was no significant correlation between anticipated turnover and a market culture (Hypothesis 3), thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. Nor was there a significant correlation between anticipated turnover and a hierarchy culture (Hypothesis 4), thus the null hypothesis was not rejected. Finally, the stepwise multilinear regression analysis established that there was no statistically significant evidence that clan culture, adhocracy culture, market culture, or hierarchy culture add independent information in predicting anticipated turnover (Hypothesis 5), thus the null hypothesis was not rejected.

Applied to the five study hypotheses, the findings showed no statistically significant correlations between anticipated turnover and each organizational culture score, and no statistical significance was found across the stepwise multilinear regression analysis-testing for hypothesis 5. Thus, no correlations were found for anticipated turnover rates and individual or collective organizational culture types.

Conclusions

The findings of this research did not yield statistically significant evidence that superintendent turnover was impacted by superintendents' perceptions of school board

culture. In other words, this study found no evidence that anticipated turnover is correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board among school superintendents in the State of Alaska. However, it may be that real associations and differences in the population exist and that (a) this study design was not structured to capture those differences or (b) the correlation was too weak to be detected with the present sample size. There is reason to believe that school board culture may have some meaningful impact on superintendents' decision to quit their jobs. While there has been little research devoted to this subject, several of the studies discussed in this paper provide a compelling argument that clashes between superintendents and school boards have negative consequences for educational delivery. Superintendents who encounter challenging relationships with their school boards frequently track with lower job satisfaction and greater likelihood of attrition (Czaja & Harman, 1997; Eadie, 2007; Garza, 2008). The AASA survey findings reported by Glass et al. (2000) revealed that 14.6% of American school superintendents reported that conflicts with their school board were a key predictor of their intention to quit. When these findings are broken down by size of school district, the percentages shift dramatically. Among superintendents working in large school districts of 25,000 students or more, 10.2% identified conflict with their school board as influencing turnover decisions; however, among school superintendents supervising small districts serving less than 300 pupils, the influence of negative relations with the school board greatly increased, with 25% of these superintendents expressing intention to leave decisions related to tensions in their relations with their school board.

These findings are important for how they may pertain to the conditions for superintendents working in Alaska. The Urban Institute reported statistics for 2001 that showed that the largest school district in Alaska was Anchorage, serving just under 50,000 students. The next largest school district was Fairbanks with 15,659, followed by Matanuska-Susitna with just over 13,000 students. Excluding these three districts, the seven next largest districts accounted for fewer than 10,000 students each, with five of these falling well under 5,000 students. The majority of Alaska's school districts fall in the low-middle to small school district enrollment range serving small to extremely small numbers of students. Extrapolating from the AASA findings reported by Glass et al. (2000), it would stand to reason that many of Alaska's superintendents are supervising school districts with relatively small enrollments and that these superintendents may be likelier to experience the negative impact of challenging board relationships.

The competing values framework in relation to school boards. Despite this study's results of no significant correlation appearing to exist between superintendents' perceptions of school board culture and their expressed intention to quit, this investigation did yield some notable findings within the context of the null hypotheses not being rejected. Although the identification of organizational culture types ranged at the mid to low end of appearance for the school boards as represented by the superintendents, clan culture was shown to have a substantially greater presence than the other three culture types. Between the remaining three, the prevalence of appearance was in the range of a few percentage points, but clan culture was reported almost twice as much as the other three cultures in terms of the category descriptors. Thus, the findings

indicate that this sample of superintendents in Alaska most commonly perceive a clan culture response from their school board in their interactions.

The competing values framework, initially created by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (as cited by Tharp, 2009) and refined by Cameron and Quinn (2006), sets out the four organizational types in quadrant form so that clan culture shares the features of "flexibility and discretion" with adhocracy culture, and on the other axis shares "internal focus and integration" with hierarchy culture (Lincoln, 2010, p. 4). In type and style, clan culture is most removed from market culture. This may explain in part why market culture descriptors achieved the lowest scores for the superintendents although, even then, market culture was just a percentage point or two behind adhocracy culture and two more percentage points behind hierarchy culture for this study population.

Clan culture. Clan culture is alternatively referred to as the collaborative culture within organizational culture research. As noted above, clan culture shares an internal focus with the hierarchy culture and seeks to integrate systems—individuals, beliefs, values, assumptions, behaviors—within the organization in order to realize greater effectiveness in pursuing objectives. However, clan culture is less rigid in observing rules and form than hierarchy culture is. In clan culture, integration is encouraged through flexibility and discretion that seeks to support the individual in making a commitment to the organization, rather than requiring that the member make the commitment and observe structure as in the hierarchy culture. Tharp (2009) suggested that American organizational theory began to embrace the value of clan culture following the rapid growth and success of Japanese companies during the 1970s and 1980s. The

researcher stated that American society's socio-cultural emphasis on individualism was traditionally different than the collaborative clan culture seen in many effective Japanese firms. Much more so than American companies, Japanese companies appeared modeled on family structures, with members identifying with the whole organization rather than being out for themselves. Teamwork, group cohesion, supportive working environments, loyalty to the organization, and a commitment to its mission and to fellow employees typified this type of organizational culture. This philosophy was manifested in the way work was carried out: "Companies were made up of semi-autonomous teams that had the ability to hire and fire their own members, and employees were encouraged to participate in determining how things would get done" (Tharp, 2009, p. 4). The leader in a clan culture serves as the facilitator or mentor of these interactions, interceding when necessary to keep the organization on track but otherwise seeking to help other members of the organization recognize and fulfill their potential within the organization.

Cameron and Freeman (1991) identified the primary attributes of clan organizational culture as "cohesiveness, participation, teamwork, and sense of family" (p. 29). The strategic emphases of clan culture are on fostering organizational commitment, building morale, and developing individual member resources. Leaders who exhibit a clan orientation tend to be facilitators and mentors, even parent figures (Lincoln, 2010). The connections between members of the organization are built and maintained through a sense of belonging to the group, loyalty, and tradition. Tharp (2009) stated that a clan culture is an "open and friendly place to work where people share a lot of themselves" (p. 5). The researcher further stated that a clan culture leaves members with a strong feeling

that they belong and that their contribution is important, so "teamwork, participation, and consensus" are central features of the experience of working in a clan culture (p. 5).

Based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and particularly that related to superintendent and school board relations, it would seem likely that a school board demonstrating primarily a clan culture orientation would be regarded as largely desirable by many superintendents. An organizational culture that supports and encourages the participation of its members and where teamwork and cohesiveness are prioritized would appear to be one that is well suited to the particular uniqueness of the superintendent and school board relationship. For example, the clan culture descriptor on the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument for "management of employees" is "the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation." Castallo (2003) and Glass et al. (2000) referenced examples of superintendent-school board relations that reflected this model and suggested that partnerships in which the superintendent perceives sharing responsibility with school board members—particularly if the superintendent retains daily system management authority—seem to correlate with good rates of job satisfaction for superintendents.

However, the willingness to share responsibility with a school board that exhibits clan culture—and therefore is likely to be somewhat to very involved in decision-making and policy implementation—may not sit well with a superintendent who exhibits a management or leadership style that is more definitively aligned with another culture quadrant. Eadie's (2007) case example of a superintendent-school board relationship that had gone wrong was an example, the author contended, of a defensive and resistant

superintendent unwilling to work collaboratively with the school board. It is impossible to determine from Eadie's narrative whether the school board culture reflected a clan, hierarchy, adhocracy, or market culture. But what is apparent is that the superintendent struggled greatly with the school board's push to be as involved as it expected to be and, not surprisingly, the superintendent lost the battle. Lincoln (2010) observed that Cameron and Quinn's research indicated that the most effective leaders exhibit a style consistent with the organizational culture they work in; however, Lincoln cautioned this might be a fairly low bar. Lincoln believes the most effective managers are able to adapt to the organizational culture they encounter, to assess their own strengths and weaknesses with regard to that culture, and to make changes or determinations accordingly (p. 5).

The study findings demonstrated that the Alaska superintendents surveyed identified the presence of hierarchy culture, adhocracy culture, and market culture at almost equivalent levels. Each of these three culture types was a little more than half as common as clan culture was perceived to be for the school boards considered. Of these remaining three, hierarchy culture was reported slightly more frequently than adhocracy or market cultures. The hierarchy organizational culture represents a traditional top-down authority orientation. Tharp (2009) identified hierarchy culture as typical in large, bureaucratic organizations such as huge corporations and government agencies. The focus in a hierarchy culture is in executing the vision and goals of the leader through well-defined structure and specific rules and regulations that dictate how business is conducted. There is not a great deal of room for inviting member contributions to decision-making efforts. This type of an approach might be regarded as inviting some

chaos into the management and operations of the organization; however, the commitment is really to stability, order, integration, uniformity, predictability, and focus (Cameron & Freeman, 1991).

Hierarchy culture. The hierarchy culture depends on a strong leadership style of management, coordination, and organization. Efficiency is one of the guiding principles of hierarchy culture, and this type of organization prizes fast and disciplined work systems. According to the competing values framework, hierarchy culture shares the orientation of inward focus and integration with clan culture. This was identified by Cameron and Freeman (1991) as "internal maintenance" with a high regard for "smoothing activities" (p. 27). In other words, the hierarchy culture is focused on internal systems, as is clan culture, and seeks to realize efficiency through smooth transitions and clear structure. It differs from clan culture in its emphasis on the processes of realizing control through rules and regulations, emphasizing order and stability, and curbing individual member advocacy and expressions of viewpoints. The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument provides the hierarchy descriptor for management of employees as "characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships." The descriptor for organization glue is that "formal rules and policies" hold the organization together because "a smooth-running organization is important."

Given the assessment hierarchy descriptors, it is possible to envision that at least some of the Alaska superintendents' would perceive their school boards as exemplifying hierarchy culture in aspects of their interactions. It is similarly imaginable that under

certain conditions, individual superintendents would find this approach to be acceptable or at least tolerable, and would therefore not report responses that indicated a correlation between an intention to quit their job and their identification of hierarchy culture. Some research has shown that hierarchy culture in educational systems correlates with higher organizational effectiveness and may correlate with higher leadership satisfaction (Lincoln, 2010).

Adhocracy culture. Adhocracy culture drew the next greatest percentage of perception response from the Alaska superintendents in this study. The adhocracy culture shares the flexibility and individual discretion quadrant axis with clan culture, but exemplifies an external focus and differentiation, which it shares on the quadrant axis with market culture. The adhocracy culture is one that is perhaps the most similar to the American way, culturally and historically, emphasizing as it does the prominence of the individual. This orientation is very different from the clan and hierarchy cultures, which prioritize the internal workings of the organization first, whereas the adhocracy culture emphasizes exploring new strategies, being entrepreneurial and inventive in approach. Another way of describing adhocracy culture might be "thinking outside the box." Members of the adhocracy organizational culture favor creative and dynamic thinking and strategy, and the push is towards continuing innovation and growth. Traditional approaches are not as well received as those that imply some risk-taking and, as Lincoln (2010) stated, the adhocracy culture "thrives in an uncertain, ambiguous, and turbulent environment" (p. 5). In this representation, the adhocracy culture is almost the opposite of the hierarchy culture, which depends on stability, continuity, and rule following in

pursuit of organizational effectiveness and excellence (Cameron & Freeman, 1991). The adhocracy culture shares with the clan culture a commitment to flexibility and individual member discretion, inviting the contributions of organization members at all levels. The differences are that members of clan culture express this discretion and experience flexibility within the context of loyal and committed service to the other members of the organization and the organization as its own entity, whereas members of the adhocracy culture understand their discretion and flexibility as a function of their individual freedom. The overriding philosophy is one of differentiation, that is, carving out a unique and innovative approach that distinguishes the organization from all other organizations. The adhocracy culture may be becoming more prevalent; Tharp (2009) contended that "social, economic, and technological changes made older corporate attitudes and tactics less efficient" (p. 4). The remarkable success of technology-focused companies such as Google and Facebook have highlighted the adhocracy organizational culture in recent years, and this visibility is likely to inform other organizational cultures as these companies become models for "how to do business."

This is not to suggest that an adhocracy culture is therefore suited to all organizations. While there has been some evidence in the literature that aspects of adhocracy culture may enhance organizational performance and member satisfaction in the field of education (Lincoln, 2010), it does not appear to be a primary culture orientation for Alaska's school boards. One can gather from the descriptors of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument how adhocracy culture might be demonstrated in some school board approaches. For instance, the dominant characteristic

of adhocracy is represented by this statement: "The organization is a very dynamic entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks." The criteria of the success descriptor for adhocracy is "the organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator." This may be true for some small group of school boards; however, the majority of school boards are unlikely to exemplify this focus, instead regarding success as meeting accountability requirements and maintaining a balanced budget while effectively serving the district's students. These are not dynamic or innovative goals, but they are necessary to secure the health of the school district.

Market culture. Finally, market culture was the least frequently perceived for school boards by Alaska's superintendents, but it didn't fall far behind adhocracy or even hierarchy culture orientations. Tharp (2009) traced the rise of the market culture in American life to the late 1960s. Prior to that, a traditional hierarchy culture was the most common and valued form of organizational culture from a business perspective. However, market culture with its focus on competitiveness and achievement began to take hold as a model with the success of huge corporations like General Electric. Tharp noted that former GE CEO, Jack Welch, at one point declared that if divisions within the company were not performing at first or second in their markets, he would simply sell off those divisions. The focus of the market culture, like the adhocracy culture, is outward, directed toward differentiation from other competitors. Like hierarchy culture, market culture values rules and order and is highly structured. However, it is unique with its commitment to production and goal-achievement above all else—above organizational

process and integration, above member satisfaction, as well as above flexibility and innovation. The glue that binds the organization is the commitment to winning. Competitive advantage and goal achievement define the market culture (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Lincoln, 2010). Based on this description, it would appear that market culture would not be a natural fit for educational systems. Many people would be hesitant about the idea of commodifying children and the notion that learning could be reduced to a competitive system that prioritizes goal-achievement over valuing process, which could be seen as counterintuitive. However, there is an argument to be made that with the current education environment dictated by NCLB accountability standards and high stakes testing, school boards might realize benefits by adopting elements of a market culture. School boards that lack the commitment to realizing these educational goals may jeopardize their district's funding for certain school programs. The manner in which the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument captures market culture in the management of employees' descriptor as "characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement" might be a logical feature for a school board culture to express under these circumstances.

Cultural differentiation and combination. Leaders that can negotiate all four styles of organizational culture tend to be the most effective because they are quickly able to adapt to changing circumstances, assess the evolving conditions, and determine the most appropriate response. Lincoln (2010) reported that there is an increasing amount of empirical evidence that this type of "behavioral complexity" distinguishes vital and successful leaders because they can meet the competing demands of an organization.

This evidence would appear to support the thought that (a) it is difficult to define the organizational culture completely and that (b) it is highly unlikely that any single organization will purely embody a distinct organizational culture type. Because organizations are comprised of human beings, they are subject to the same complexities and potential for change that people are, but within a different format and on another scale. Therefore, even a rigidly hierarchical organizational culture may have isolated moments or even periods where decisions reflecting a creative strain of adhocracy, the culture quadrant opposite of hierarchy, may be present and effectively utilized.

As continuing research is performed and findings are published on the effects of organizational culture on the operations of an organization and the performance and satisfaction of the members of the organization, a more comprehensive understanding of the interrelationships of behavioral complexity for both the individual member and the organizational culture as a whole is likely to emerge. The current consensus among organizational culture researchers is that no single culture is better than any of the others (Cameron & Freeman, 1991; Tharp, 2009). As Lincoln (2010) observed, the "proper culture for each organization depends on the organization's industry and strategy" (p. 5). Even within a given sector, individual organizations may approach the shared sector concerns differently. By way of example, Cameron and Freeman (1991) reported evidence that in a university setting, clan culture tracked with higher scores for satisfaction across a number of student and administrator perceptions of the organization than did any of the other three organizational culture types. However, Lincoln observed that Cameron's previous research had found that "organizational effectiveness in

institutions of higher education was highest in organizations that emphasized both the adhocracy and hierarchy cultures" (p. 5). Organizational effectiveness may require the organization to bring different culture orientations to the organization, depending on the nature of the work and the goals that are identified. If this is true for many complex organizations—and the evidence suggests that it is—it would appear to speak to the necessity for leaders to be able to identify and assess changing organizational culture and to determine how best to integrate and manage these "cultural differences."

It is important to recognize that school boards across the country are highly differentiated. They are subject to the particular conditions of their school district, encompassing economic, political, and socio-cultural issues, as well as the distinct demographics of their student population. Thus, a school board in Los Angeles is going to have substantively different concerns than the school board in Camden, Maine. While both share the essential mission of ensuring quality education to their district's students, the way in which this mission can be best fulfilled will be unique to their local issues and conditions (Firestone, 2009). These differences will likely contribute to differences in board culture. School board members tend to represent the predominant values and beliefs of the community, and these personal orientations further inform and shape school board culture (Czubaj, 2002; Farmer, 2009; Fusarelli, 2006). It is imaginable that a superintendent leaving the Los Angeles school district to assume the superintendency in Camden, Maine will encounter a school board culture dissimilar to that with which he or she had grown accustomed to working. It is also imaginable that even within the state of Alaska, a variation of this "culture shock" would exist for a superintendent moving from

the Hydaburg school district (less than 300 students) to the superintendency of the Anchorage school district (almost 50,000 students).

The findings of this study indicate that Alaska superintendents do not perceive a single organizational culture as overwhelmingly informing their school boards' conduct or interactions. This, in itself, is an interesting outcome because it suggests that school boards may display different aspects of organizational culture, perhaps depending on changing circumstances or related to a particular issue. Because this study was not designed to track individual superintendents' relations with their school boards and determine the exact mix, or conversely the isolation of culture types exemplified by a single school board, this remains an open question. On a related note, the individual superintendents' intention-to-quit scores were not tracked according to their specific school board culture, so the matter of whether school board culture informs intention to quit decisions for Alaska's superintendents also remains an open question. The fact that the null hypotheses of this study were not rejected speaks to the need to continue to explore this potential relationship, because much of the literature reviewed for this study compellingly demonstrates that school board beliefs and behaviors impact superintendents' experience of, and thoughts about, their work.

Recommendations

The findings of this research suggest limitations in the study design that could be addressed in future research efforts to explore the impact of school board culture on superintendents' intention to leave their position. No statistically significant correlation between intention to quit and school board culture was found for any of the four culture

types as formulated by the competing values framework. The null hypotheses were not rejected. Further, some evidence was indicated for the identified presence of all four culture types with clan culture appearing to be the most commonly perceived by the surveyed Alaskan superintendents. The inconclusive findings of this study raise interesting questions that deserve further exploration. Some suggestions for potential directions such investigations might take are provided here.

Future research might consider results by distinguishing between those superintendents reporting a high score on the Anticipated Turnover Scale, suggesting a greater intention to quit than those superintendents scoring at the low end of the scale (likely to remain in the position), to explore whether differences emerge between these two groups in regard to Organizational Culture Assessment scores. It may be that superintendents with a high level of intention to quit have significantly different perceptions of their school board cultures than do those with the intention to remain on the job. This study considered the average across the superintendent population and did not tease out individual responses. Consequently, it may be that the superintendent(s) reporting the highest score on the Anticipated Turnover Scale of 6.08 might have significantly different organizational culture scores than the superintendent(s) who expressed the lowest intention to quit (1.33 on the Anticipated Turnover Scale). This study was not designed to explore individual differences in the various superintendents' responses. It is possible that the averaging of scores for the superintendents—the majority of whom appeared less inclined to express a clear intention to leave in the foreseeable future—had the effect of hiding differences for those at the low or high end

of the Anticipated Turnover scores. This is an avenue of investigation that might merit some research attention.

A statistical power analysis showed that a sample size of 47 produced 80% likelihood to detect a population correlation of .40 or greater (in absolute value). This study provides some evidence that if there is a correlation between organizational culture and anticipated turnover, it is likely to be weaker than a correlation of .40 (in absolute value). Therefore, further study with a larger sample size, including superintendents from multiple states may be warranted, in order to determine if weaker correlations exist.

It would appear that the degrees of prevalence of the four organizational culture types among school boards would constitute another useful area of exploration. Clan culture was reported most frequently by the superintendents in this study, but the research design did not accommodate for individual superintendent scores on each item of the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. For instance, did some superintendents perceive their school boards as consistently representing one type of culture, or did a number of them select descriptors that provided a picture of a mixed approach to organizational culture as exemplified by a given school board? It would also be interesting to determine whether, as the literature suggests (Glass et al., 2000), size of school district appears to correlate with certain aspects of school board culture in a way that provides independent information predicting anticipated turnover among superintendents. To that end, other demographic variables might be useful to consider such as the age, gender, race, and tenure experience of both superintendents and school board members to see if these have any correlation with school board culture.

Given the high rate of superintendent turnover nationally, and the even higher rates that have been reported for Alaska's superintendents, the continuing investigation of the predictors of superintendent job satisfaction and intention to stay or leave the job are clearly merited.

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Appendix A: IRB Approval

Institutional Review Board

March 16, 2011

To	Gary Jacobsen, PhD Principal Investigator
From	University of Alaska Fairbanks IRB
Re	[203936-1] Alaskan Superintendent Turnover: Is there a Correlation between Turnover and the Organizational Culture of the School Board

Thank you for submitting the New Project referenced below. The submission was handled by Exempt Review. The Office of Research Integrity has determined that the proposed research qualifies for exemption from the requirements of 45 CFR 46. This exemption does not waive the researchers' responsibility to adhere to basic ethical principles for the responsible conduct of research and discipline specific professional standards.

Title	Alaskan Superintendent Turnover: Is there a Correlation between Turnover and the Organizational Culture of the School Board
Received	December 8, 2010
Exemption Category	2
Effective Date	March 16, 2011

Notes

Per correspondence from researcher, protocol has been exempted; surveys are anonymous and identifiers will only be used to distribute gift cards for participation.

Note the Consent form must be corrected in two places: the second paragraph should say "anonymous" instead of "confidential" and the Confidentiality section should reinforce anonymity; that contact information provided by participant in order to receive gift card will never be linked to their responses; also change "confidential" to "anonymous" and "protect your confidentiality" to "protect your identity".

Also check entire Consent form for spelling/punctuation errors: double periods, "assessable" should be "accessible", etc

This action is included on the March 24, 2011 IRB Agenda.

Prior to making substantive changes to the scope of research, research tools, or personnel involved on the project, please contact the Office of Research Integrity to determine whether or not additional review is required. Additional review is not required for small editorial changes to improve the clarity or readability of the research tools or other documents.

Best regards,

Meredith Mecham Smith
Assistant to Kim Cameron

Appendix B: OCAI Permission of Use

Permission to use Organizational Culture Assessment Inventory

Dave Herbert

Cameron, Kim S. (Oct 26

Dear Mr. Herbert

Thank you for your inquiry regarding the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI). Kim Cameron copyrighted the OCAI in the 1980s, but because it is published in the **Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture** book, it is also copyrighted by Jossey Bass. The evidence for validity and reliability is in the appendices of the book.

The instrument may be used free of charge for research or student purposes, but a licensing fee is charged when the instrument is used by a company or by consulting firms to generate revenues. Since you are using it for research, you may use it free of charge. Professor Cameron would appreciate it if you would share your results with him when you finish your study.

We do have a local company (BDS, Behavioral Data Services, 734-663-2990) which can distribute the instrument on-line, tabulate scores, and produce feedback reports for a fee. These reports include comparison data from approximately 10,000 organizations—representing many industries and sectors, five continents, and approximately 100,000 individuals. If you are interested in these services, please contact BDS directly.

I hope this explanation is helpful, and I wish you well on your project. Please let me know if you have other questions.

[illegible]

[illegible] to Kim [illegible] Oct 27 [illegible]

Meredith

Thank you very much for your response to my request. I will absolutely share my results once I have collected and tabulated my data utilizing the instrument. Do you know if the instrument has ever been administered to school district governing boards? Do you have any background information on how the instrument was developed and why the instrument was developed or know of a web link that contains this information that I would be able to access to support my use of the instrument? I am in a very remote location in Alaska and any help you would be able to provide would be greatly appreciated.

I will purchase the book but am curious as to where I may be able to find a copy of the instrument online. Would it be possible for you to e-mail me a copy of the instrument and the scoring guide? I will also contact the BDS to inquire about their services.

Once again, I am very thankful for the permission to utilize the instrument and for the time you have taken to provide me with valuable information.

Dave Herbert

[illegible]

[illegible] [illegible]

Cameron, Kim to me [illegible] Nov 1 [illegible]

Thank you very much for your note and inquiry, David. The book, Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture, contains the logic and rationale for the OCAI development as well as norm data, suggestions for administering and interpreting results, and so on. Sherry Siedel at BDS will be able to assist you in administering the instrument on line. Sherry is a very capable person and has been gathering data on the OCAI for 25 years.

Best wishes in your project.

Kim

[illegible]
[illegible]

Appendix C: ATS Permission of Use

November 14, 2010

David Herbert
Superintendent
School District
Alaska
<[redacted]>

Dear Superintendent Herbert:

Thank you for your email regarding information about instruments in the Anticipated Turnover Among Nursing Staff study (#R01 NU00908). We are pleased to be able to share this information with you.

Attached you will find the **Anticipated Turnover Scale**, along with the scoring key, validity and reliability estimates obtained on our sample. You have permission for use, and we trust this information will be helpful.

If we can be of any other assistance to you, please let us know: 520-805-8298. Also, we would request that you share any information regarding the process of using the instrument with the superintendents and possibly others plus the results of outcomes of its use. We wish you much success in your research on the turnover rates of school Superintendents in Alaska and look forward to working with on job satisfaction endeavors.

Sincerely,

Jan R. Atwood, PhD, RN, FAAN
Professor Emerita, Colleges of Nursing and Medicine
University of Nebraska Medical Center, and
Ajunct Professor, University of Arizona College of Nursing
email: atwoodj@comcast.net
phone: 520-825-8298; fax: 520-825-8298

notified: A.S. Hinshaw, PhD, FAAN, Dean, Graduate College of Nursing, Tri-Services University, Maryland

Appendix D: Informed Consent Letter and Superintendent Questionnaire

1.

Alaskan Superintendent Turnover: is there a correlation between turnover and the organizational cultures of school boards
IRB #_203836-1____
Date Approved: _3/16/2011_____

Description of the Study:

Dear Alaskan Superintendent, my name is David Herbert a fellow superintendent in the state of Alaska and I am conducting a study in partial fulfillment of the requirements for my dissertation. I am requesting that you take part in this research study which will attempt to quantify Alaskan superintendents' intention to quit their job and to determine if their intention to quit is correlated with the organizational culture of the school district governing board. The goal of this study is to determine if superintendent turnover in the state of Alaska is correlated with the organizational culture of the school board. If a certain organizational culture is found to be correlated with a lower likelihood that a superintendent will quite their job, some governing board presidents may wish to take steps to adopt the most effective organizational culture within their governing board. You are being asked to take part in this study because you are a current Alaskan superintendent. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you agree to be in the study.

If you decide to take part, you will be asked to complete an anonymous online instrument which will combine demographic information, an instrument called the Anticipated Turnover Scale and an instrument called the Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument. It is estimated that the entire instrument should not take longer than fifteen minutes to complete. The data collected from superintendents statewide will be analyzed as a whole, and no individual data will be revealed in the study. This study is expected to be completed by May of 2012, upon completion of the dissertation.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

The risks to you if you take part in this study are virtually non-existent. Any individual data provided will not be revealed. The data will be analyzed on a state wide basis and will not identify individuals or individual districts.

- The potential benefits to you for taking part in this study are listed below:
- In order for a superintendent to be successful in their job, they must work effectively with the school district governing board. School district governing boards operate within the context of a certain organizational culture. The type of culture may vary from one district to another. Superintendents may or may not fit well within a given organizational culture. There have been no studies published to show whether or not Alaskan superintendents' intentions to quit their job is correlated with the organizational culture of the district governing board. Without this information superintendents may not have all of the information they need to maximize the health of the Alaskan educational system.
- If a certain organizational culture is found to be correlated with a lower likelihood that there will be superintendent turnover, some governing board presidents may wish to take steps to adopt the most effective organizational culture within their governing board.
- I do not guarantee that you will benefit from taking part in this study, however, without this information, stakeholders such as superintendents, governing boards, and educational researchers may not have all the information they need to maximize the health of the Alaskan education system.
-

Compensation:

I will give each superintendent who completes the online instrument a ten dollar ($10.00) gift card to Starbucks Coffee House in appreciation for taking the time to complete the online instrument.

2.

Confidentiality:

- Any information obtained about you from the research including answers to questionnaires, history, or other information will be kept strictly anonymous.
- Any information with your name attached will not be shared with anyone outside the research team.
- We will protect your identity by coding your information with a number so no one can trace your answers to your name, properly disposing of computer data upon completion of data analysis, limiting access to identifiable information, and storing all data on a password protected secure computer, which will not be accessible to the public.
- The data derived from this study may be used in reports, presentations, and publications but you will not be individually identified.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your decision to take part in the study is voluntary. You are free to choose whether or not to take part in the study. If you decide to take part in the study you can stop at any time or change your mind and ask to be removed from the study. No matter what you decide, now or later, nothing will happen to you as a result.

Contacts and Questions:

If you have questions now, feel free to ask me now. If you have questions later, you may contact me at the following e-mail address: dmqherbert@gmail.com or at the following phone number: (907) 438-6006

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, you can contact the UAF Office of Research Integrity at 474-7800 (Fairbanks area) or 1-866-876-7800 (toll-free outside the Fairbanks area) or fyirb@uaf.edu.

Publication:

The data collected and analyzed in this study will be used for partial fulfillment of the requirements for a dissertation. In addition, the dissertation will be accessible through the University of Alaska Fairbanks library.

Statement of Consent:
I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been provided a copy of this form.

Note 2: An informed consent form is not required for anonymous surveys that are returned by mail or are conducted via the internet by a survey tool (e.g. SurveyMonkey). However, the same information must be provided to potential participants. In the case of anonymous surveys this is typically done in a cover letter or opening paragraph. You should include a statement (paper forms) or button (online) such as "By returning/completing this survey I agree to participate in the study".

*** 1. Statement of Consent:**

I have read a copy of the consent form for this study. I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study.

Yes

No

3.

* **1. Please enter the number of years you have been a superintendent in the State of Alaska**

Number of years: _____

* **2. Were you a Superintendent in another state prior to coming to Alaska?**

Yes

No

* **3. Did you work as an administrator in the State of Alaska prior to becoming a Superintendent in Alaska?**

Yes

No

* **4. How long have you been a superintendent in the district in which you are now employed?**

Number of years:

4.

Please read each statement below and indicate your level of agreement with each statement.

*** 1. I plan to stay in my position awhile.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 2. I am quite sure I will leave my position in the foreseeable future.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 3. Deciding to stay or leave my position is not a critical issue for me at this point in time.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 4. I know whether or not I'll be leaving this district within a short time.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 5. If I got another job offer tomorrow, I would give it serious consideration.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 6. I have no intentions of leaving my present position.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 7. I've been in my position about as long as I want to.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 8. I am certain I will be staying here awhile.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 9. I don't have any specific idea how much longer I will stay.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 10. I plan to hang on to this job awhile.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 11. There are big doubts in my mind as to whether or not I will really stay in this district.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

*** 12. I plan to leave this position shortly.**

- Agree Strongly
- Moderately Agree
- Slightly Agree
- Undecided
- Slightly Disagree
- Moderately Disagree
- Disagree Strongly

5.

The Organizational Culture Assessment Instrument

The purpose of the Organizational Cultural Assessment Instrument is to assess six key dimensions of organizational culture. For purposes of this study, the organization of interest is your "SCHOOL BOARD". In completing the instrument you will be providing a picture of the fundamental assumptions on which your SCHOOL BOARD operates and the values that characterize it.

Please be as accurate as you can in responding to the items so that your resulting cultural diagnosis will be as precise as possible.

The organizational cultural assessment instrument consists of six items. Each item has four alternatives. Divide 100 points among these four alternatives, depending on the extent to which each alternative is similar to your own SCHOOL BOARD. Give a higher number of points to the alternative that is most similar to your SCHOOL BOARD.

For example, on item 1, if you think alternative A is very similar to your SCHOOL BOARD, alternatives B and C are somewhat similar, and alternative D is hardly similar at all, you might give 55 points to A, 20 points each to B and C, and five points to D. Just be sure that your points for items A through D total 100 points.

Remember, in each of the statements below, "ORGANIZATION" refers to "YOUR SCHOOL BOARD".

* **1. Dominant Characteristics of your organization**

A. The organization is a very personal place. It is like an extended family. People seem to share a lot of themselves.

B. The organization is a very dynamic and entrepreneurial place. People are willing to stick their necks out and take risks.

C. The organization is very results-oriented. A major concern is with getting the job done. People are very competitive and achievement-oriented.

D. The organization is very controlled and structured place. Formal procedures generally govern what people do.

Total Points for Alternatives A through D must equal 100.

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value _____

Alternative D Point Value _____

*** 2. Organizational Leadership**

A.The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify mentoring, facilitating or nurturing.

B.The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify entrepreneurship, innovation or risk taking.

C.The leadership and the organization is generally considered to exemplify a no-nonsense, aggressive, results-oriented focus.

D.The leadership in the organization is generally considered to exemplify coordinating, organizing, or smooth-running efficiency.

Total points for Alternatives A through D must equal 100

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value

Alternative D Point Value

*** 3. Management of Employees**

A.The management style in the organization is characterized by teamwork, consensus, and participation.

B.The management style in the organization is characterized by individual risk taking, innovation, freedom, and uniqueness.

C.The management style in the organization is characterized by hard-driving competitiveness, high demands, and achievement.

D.The management style in the organization is characterized by security of employment, conformity, predictability, and stability in relationships.

Alternatives A through D must total 100 points.

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value _____

Alternative D Point Value

*** 4. Organization Glue**

A.The glue that holds the organization together is loyalty and mutual trust. Commitment to this organization runs high.

B.The glue that holds the organization together is commitment to innovation and development. There is an emphasis on being on the cutting edge.

C.The glue that holds the organization together is the emphasis on achievement and goal accomplishment.

D.The glue that holds the organization together is formal rules and policies. Maintaining a smooth-running organization is important.

Alternatives A through D must total 100 points

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value

Alternative D Point Value

*** 5. Strategic Emphasis**

A.The organization emphasizes human development. High trust, openness, and participation persist.

B.The organization emphasizes acquiring new resources and creating new challenges. Trying new things and prospecting for opportunities are valued.

C.The organization emphasizes competitive action and achievement. Hitting stretch targets and winning in the marketplace are dominant.

D.The organization emphasizes permanence and stability. Efficiency, control, and smooth operations are important.

Alternatives A through D must total 100 points

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value _____

Alternative D Point Value

* 6. Criteria of Success

A.The organization defines success on the basis of the development of human resources, teamwork, employee commitment, and concern for people.

B.The organization defines success on the basis of having the most unique or newest products. It is a product leader and innovator.

C.The organization defines success on the basis of winning in the marketplace and out pacing the competition. Competitive market leadership is key.

D.The organization defines success on the basis of efficiency. Dependable delivery, smooth scheduling, and low-cost production are critical.

Alternatives A through D must total 100

Alternative A Point Value _____

Alternative B Point Value _____

Alternative C Point Value _____

Alternative D Point Value

7. In what ways has the working relationship between you and your school board influenced your decision to remain in the district you are in? Please Explain

OR

In what ways has the working relationship between you and your school board influenced your decision to leave the district you are in? Please Explain

Appendix E: Frequency Tables and Descriptive Statistics for all Survey Questions

Were you a Superintendent in another state prior to coming to Alaska?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	27.7	27.7	27.7
	No	34	72.3	72.3	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Did you work as an administrator in the State of Alaska prior to becoming a Superintendent in Alaska?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	34	72.3	72.3	72.3
	No	13	27.7	27.7	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I plan to stay in my position awhile.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	23	48.9	48.9	48.9
	Moderately Agree	9	19.1	19.1	68.1
	Slightly Agree	2	4.3	4.3	72.3
	Undecided	4	8.5	8.5	80.9
	Slightly Disagree	1	2.1	2.1	83.0
	Moderately Disagree	2	4.3	4.3	87.2
	Disagree Strongly	6	12.8	12.8	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I am quite sure I will leave my position in the foreseeable future.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	15	31.9	31.9	31.9
	Moderately Agree	3	6.4	6.4	38.3
	Slightly Agree	4	8.5	8.5	46.8
	Undecided	5	10.6	10.6	57.4
	Slightly Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	66.0
	Moderately Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	74.5
	Disagree Strongly	12	25.5	25.5	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Deciding to stay or leave my position is not a critical issue for me at this point in time.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	15	31.9	31.9	31.9
	Moderately Agree	12	25.5	25.5	57.4
	Slightly Agree	3	6.4	6.4	63.8
	Undecided	5	10.6	10.6	74.5
	Slightly Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	83.0
	Moderately Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	91.5
	Disagree Strongly	4	8.5	8.5	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I know whether or not I'll be leaving this district within a short time.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	20	42.6	42.6	42.6
	Moderately Agree	3	6.4	6.4	48.9
	Slightly Agree	3	6.4	6.4	55.3
	Undecided	6	12.8	12.8	68.1
	Slightly Disagree	1	2.1	2.1	70.2
	Moderately Disagree	5	10.6	10.6	80.9
	Disagree Strongly	9	19.1	19.1	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

If I got another job offer tomorrow, I would give it serious consideration.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	4	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Moderately Agree	7	14.9	14.9	23.4
	Slightly Agree	4	8.5	8.5	31.9
	Undecided	1	2.1	2.1	34.0
	Slightly Disagree	3	6.4	6.4	40.4
	Moderately Disagree	8	17.0	17.0	57.4
	Disagree Strongly	20	42.6	42.6	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I have no intentions of leaving my present position.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	16	34.0	34.0	34.0
	Moderately Agree	5	10.6	10.6	44.7
	Slightly Agree	4	8.5	8.5	53.2
	Undecided	5	10.6	10.6	63.8
	Slightly Disagree	2	4.3	4.3	68.1
	Moderately Disagree	5	10.6	10.6	78.7
	Disagree Strongly	10	21.3	21.3	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I've been in my position about as long as I want to.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	4	8.5	8.5	8.5
	Moderately Agree	5	10.6	10.6	19.1
	Slightly Agree	7	14.9	14.9	34.0
	Undecided	2	4.3	4.3	38.3
	Slightly Disagree	2	4.3	4.3	42.6
	Moderately Disagree	8	17.0	17.0	59.6
	Disagree Strongly	19	40.4	40.4	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I am certain I will be staying here awhile.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	10	21.3	21.3	21.3
	Moderately Agree	13	27.7	27.7	48.9
	Slightly Agree	6	12.8	12.8	61.7
	Undecided	4	8.5	8.5	70.2
	Moderately Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	78.7
	Disagree Strongly	10	21.3	21.3	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I don't have any specific idea how much longer I will stay.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	3	6.4	6.4	6.4
	Moderately Agree	9	19.1	19.1	25.5
	Slightly Agree	1	2.1	2.1	27.7
	Undecided	4	8.5	8.5	36.2
	Slightly Disagree	8	17.0	17.0	53.2
	Moderately Disagree	6	12.8	12.8	66.0
	Disagree Strongly	16	34.0	34.0	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I plan to hang on to this job awhile.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	15	31.9	31.9	31.9
	Moderately Agree	10	21.3	21.3	53.2
	Slightly Agree	5	10.6	10.6	63.8
	Undecided	3	6.4	6.4	70.2
	Slightly Disagree	2	4.3	4.3	74.5
	Moderately Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	83.0
	Disagree Strongly	8	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

There are big doubts in my mind as to whether or not I will really stay in this district.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	1	2.1	2.1	2.1
	Moderately Agree	2	4.3	4.3	6.4
	Slightly Agree	3	6.4	6.4	12.8
	Undecided	8	17.0	17.0	29.8
	Slightly Disagree	4	8.5	8.5	38.3
	Moderately Disagree	10	21.3	21.3	59.6
	Disagree Strongly	19	40.4	40.4	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

I plan to leave this position shortly.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree Strongly	8	17.0	17.0	17.0
	Moderately Agree	2	4.3	4.3	21.3
	Slightly Agree	1	2.1	2.1	23.4
	Undecided	3	6.4	6.4	29.8
	Slightly Disagree	5	10.6	10.6	40.4
	Moderately Disagree	7	14.9	14.9	55.3
	Disagree Strongly	21	44.7	44.7	100.0
	Total	47	100.0	100.0	

Statistics

	N					
	Valid	Missing	Mean	Std. Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Please enter the number of years you have been a superintendent in the State of Alaska	47	0	5.19	4.200	1	20
How long have you been a superintendent in the district in which you are now employed (years)?	47	0	3.70	2.637	1	12